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PART XIII.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

May 1877.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART XIII.

No. 1.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(No. 330.)

Paris, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship an article which has appeared in the Paris newspaper "France" of this date, relative to communications alleged to have taken place between the Khedive and the European Powers respecting His Highness' position in the present war between Russia and Turkey.

The "France" passes for the organ of the Russian Embassy in the Paris press.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Extract from "La France" of April 30, 1877.

LA QUESTION D'EGYPTE.—NOUS annoncions, il y a quelques jours, le refus du Vice-Roi d'Egypte de fournir à la Porte le contingent de troupes et les subsides que le Sultan lui avait demandés en sa qualité de suzerain. La Porte alors cita le Khédive à Constantinople pour obtenir de lui des explications sur son refus. Ismaïl Pacha promit d'être à Stamboul dans les premiers jours de Mai. Sur ces entrefaites, le Divan rejeta le Protocole et la rupture entre la Turquie et la Russie devint imminente.

La Porte, pressée par la nécessité, se reprit à insister auprès du Vice-Roi et bientôt même le somma de faire son devoir de vassal. Ismaïl Pacha, mis en demeure, en référa aux Consuls des Puissances au Caire. Ceux-ci, après avis de leurs Gouvernements, lui conseillèrent d'envoyer le Prince Hassan à Constantinople plaider la cause de l'Egypte. Le Consul Russe affirmait que si le Vice-Roi fournissait le contingent demandé, la Russie se considérait comme en guerre avec l'Egypte, ferait occuper le Canal de Suez par sa flotte, bloquerait et bombarderait Alexandrie, &c.

Le Consul Français, M. Desmichels, ne s'opposait pas à l'envoi du contingent demandé, mais à la seule condition que les armements de l'Egypte ne nuiraient pas au service de la dette et ne porterait pas tort aux intérêts des créanciers de l'Egypte. Les Gouvernements Russe, Italien, et Allemand même appuyaient ces déclarations du Consul Français.

Fort de cet appui, le Prince Hassan s'est rendu à Constantinople.

Le Gouvernement Anglais a été le dernier à exprimer ses sentiments sur la situation. Mais, enfin, il y a trois ou quatre jours, il s'est déclaré en faveur, non du refus du contingent, mais bien simplement de la neutralisation du Canal de Suez, que la Russie menace d'occuper dans le cas où l'Egypte prêterait son concours à la Turquie.

Le Khédive a immédiatement souscrit à cette proposition. Mais, comme la question du contingent n'était pas réglée par la neutralisation du canal, Ismaïl Pacha a demandé

au Cabinet Anglais de se prononcer sur ce point. On attend encore la réponse de Londres. Mais déjà il s'est trouvé plusieurs Puissances pour proposer que non-seulement le Canal de Suez, mais bien l'Egypte entière, soit déclarée neutre, et le Vice-Roi a adhéré à cette combinaison, pour laquelle il a déjà préparé un arrangement politique et financier qu'il serait trop long de développer ici.

En résumé, on commence à comprendre que l'Egypte n'appartient plus à la Turquie, qu'elle ne s'appartient même pas à elle-même, qu'elle appartient à ses créanciers. D'où il résulte que l'Angleterre n'a plus dans la question qu'à choisir entre trois partis :—

1. Ou neutraliser l'Egypte ;

2. Ou s'unir à la Turquie pour exiger, au besoin par la force, du Khédive le contingent demandé ;

3. Ou s'entendre avec la Russie pour mettre la main sur l'Egypte elle-même, sans plus de façons.

Quel que soit le parti que choisira l'Angleterre, la France n'a plus qu'à observer en cette affaire la plus stricte neutralité politique, et continuer à se tenir sur le terrain purement financier, pour faire entendre raison au Khédive, comme elle l'a fait il y a quelques jours.

No. 2.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, April* 30, 1877.

BRITISH vessel "Industry" remains at Ibraila. I had an interview with Russian Consul and Commander last night. Permission to descend refused. I have written to Consul for confirmation and telegraphed to Ibraila.

No. 3.

Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sulina, April* 30, 1877.

FRENCH Commissioner and myself cut off from Galatz by sudden stopping of navigation of Danube by Russians. Have telegraphed through Paris for safe-conduct from Russians. Intend remaining here meanwhile.

No. 4.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, April* 30, 1877.

I WAS told to-day at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the representations said to have been made by the French Consul to the Khedive against affording military assistance to the Porte had merely reference to the influence which the complications such assistance might have on the interests of the Canal.

No. 5.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, April* 30, 1877, 10 P.M.

TURKISH Ambassador, in conformity with instructions from Constantinople, gave an assurance to-day to the Austrian Government that Turkish troops would not enter Servia if Russia also engages to respect neutrality of the province.

No. 6.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, April* 30, 1877, 10 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of 28th, I have been informed by the Kashgar Envoy that some weeks ago an Afghan was furnished with a letter to the Ameer of Cabul by the Sheikh-ul-Islam inviting him to make war upon the Russians in the cause of Mahometanism, but that the Afghan with the letter and some money given him for his journey has remained at Mecca. Sheikh-ul-Islam has been endeavouring to persuade Kashgar Envoy to return to Turkistan to raise population against Russians, but the latter assures me that he is not disposed to take any part in the matter, at any rate at present. He further informs that the Sheriff of Mecca has sent printed appeals to the Mahometans of Central Asia to rise against Russia in defence of their religion in the event of war between her and Turkey. I hope to get one of these appeals. From all I can learn it is not unlikely that the Porte will endeavour to send Agents into Central Asia.

No. 7.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.——(*Received May* 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, April* 30, 1877, 11 P.M.

ADMIRAL HOBART arrived here this evening from the Danube, having run past Russian batteries at Galatz and Reni at such high speed that he could not be fired upon.

He thinks that they will cross the river in force at Isaktcha almost without opposition and occupy the Dobrudscha.

He reports the Russians to have crossed the Kilia or northern branch of the Danube at Vilko, and established batteries on the southern bank.

I communicated to him the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 25th instant, and he would wish to take a few days to consider his decision.

No. 8.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 1, 1877, 2:45 P.M.

ENGLISH and French Danube Commissioners are at Sulina; prevented from returning to Galatz by sudden stopping of navigation of Danube by Russian Commander. They have telegraphed for safe conduct. Ask that it may be allowed.

No. 9.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1, 3·15 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Constantinople, May* 1, 1877, 10 A.M.

I HAVE been earnestly requested to say that the Turkish Government would be deeply grateful for any information which could be afforded to them of the movements of Russian fleet which is reported to have left the United States for the Mediterranean.

No. 10.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1, 6 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 1, 1877, 10·15 A.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 21st ultimo, Porte has given the necessary instructions for the preservation from injury of the Anglo-Indian cable.

No. 11.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

Constantinople, May 1, 1877, 10·30 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

GRAND VIZIER informs me that he has ascertained that the object of the frequent visits of Italian ships-of-war to Durazzo and Vallona was to carry off Prenk Bib Doda.

No. 12.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

Pera, May 1, 1877, 1 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Commander-in-chief on the Danube has been instructed by the Porte to take exceptional measures with regard to the property of neutrals on that river during war. He may close all navigation, may detain and requisition neutral vessels, subject to an indemnification, obliging them to leave or repair to certain ports under penalty of confiscation of the vessel and cargo; or even, if necessary, under regulations relating to espionage, which are to be administered by a Special Court appointed *ad hoc*. He is at liberty to adopt any measures dictated by military requirements, but ships detained in the river prior to such measures being proclaimed are not liable to seizure, whether belonging to neutrals or the enemy. The Government refuses to be responsible to shipowners and charterers for loss or hindrance to their property resulting from these measures, or from the danger to which they are exposed through not complying with them. Contraband of war, and the vessel carrying it, when duly determined by the Court, are liable to seizure. All appeals against its decisions to be made to the Supreme Court of Constantinople. The Commander-in-chief is to notify to Consuls interested, and by telegraph to Constantinople, the nature of all measures adopted by him under these instructions.

No. 13.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

St. Petersburgh, May 1, 1877, 2 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IN conformity with your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I have informed Prince Gortchakow of the withdrawal of the Turkish request for British protection of their subjects in Russia.

I have also informed the Consuls.

No. 14.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 1, 1877, 6·35 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

DO you think that it would be desirable to station a second gun-boat in the Danube, as recommended in Colonel Mansfield's despatch No. 50 of the 23rd ultimo?

Admiralty have heard that "Cockatrice" is stopped at Sulina by Russians closing navigation.

No. 15.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1, 6·50 P.M.

St. Petersburgh, May 1, 1877, 3 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

DOES your Lordship wish me to telegraph Russian intelligence from seat of war? It will probably be published by English press as early as received here.

No. 16.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 1.)

Tyflis, May 1, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

ALL thirty-eighth division gone to frontier except one battalion in Russia. I have no reliable information of the twentieth division. I think it must be on frontier, as I reported in my despatch No. 34. Statement therein seems correct.

No news of divisions which are at present other side of Caucasus.

Six regiments of cavalry and 20,000 second reserve are to be enrolled at Rostov.

Interpreter returned.

Despatch No. 60 sent.

No. 17.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 54.)

Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield's No. 50 of the 23rd instant, copy of which has been communicated to your Embassy, I have to request that you will inform me whether, in your opinion, a second British gun-boat should be stationed in the Danube under present circumstances.

The Admiralty have heard that the passage up of the "Cockatrice" has been stopped by the Russians closing the navigation.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 18.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 160.)

Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I FORWARDED to your Excellency, in my despatch of the 24th ultimo, a copy of Prince Gortchakow's Circular despatch of the $\frac{7}{19}$th ultimo, announcing that the Emperor of Russia had given orders to his armies to cross the frontiers of Turkey.

Her Majesty's Government have received this communication with deep regret. They cannot accept the statements and conclusions with which Prince Gortchakow has accompanied it, as justifying the resolution thus taken.

The Protocol to which Her Majesty's Government, at the instance of that of Russia, recently became parties required from the Sultan no fresh guarantees for the reform of his administration. With a view of enabling Russia the better to abstain from isolated action, it affirmed the interest taken in common by the Powers in the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey. It went on to declare that the Powers would watch carefully the manner in which the promises of the Ottoman Government were carried into effect; and that should their hopes once more be disappointed, they reserved to themselves the right to consider in common the means which they might deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian populations and the interests of the general peace.

To these declarations of the intentions of the Powers the consent of the Porte was not asked or required. The Porte no doubt has thought fit—unfortunately, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government—to protest against the expressions in question as implying an encroachment on the Sultan's sovereignty and independence. But while so doing, and while declaring that they cannot consider the Protocol as having any binding character on Turkey, the Turkish Government have again affirmed their intention of carrying into execution the reforms already promised.

Her Majesty's Government cannot therefore admit, as is contended by Prince Gortchakow, that the answer of the Porte removed all hope of deference on its part to the wishes and advice of Europe, and all security for the application of the suggested reforms. Nor are they of opinion that the terms of the note necessarily precluded the possibility of the conclusion of peace with Montenegro, or of the arrangement of mutual disarmament. Her Majesty's Government still believe that, with patience and moderation on both sides, these objects might not improbably have been attained.

Prince Gortchakow, however, asserts that all opening is now closed for attempts at

conciliation; that the Emperor has resolved to undertake the task of obtaining by coercion that which the unanimous efforts of all the Powers have failed to obtain from the Porte by persuasion; and he expresses His Imperial Majesty's conviction that this step is in accordance with the sentiments and the interests of Europe.

It cannot be expected that Her Majesty's Government should agree in this view. They have not concealed their feeling that the presence of large Russian forces on the frontiers of Turkey, menacing its safety, rendering disarmament impossible, and exciting a feeling of apprehension and fanaticism among the Mussulman population, constituted a material obstacle to internal pacification and reform. They cannot believe that the entrance of those armies on Turkish soil will alleviate the difficulty, or improve the condition of the Christian population throughout the Sultan's dominions.

But the course on which the Russian Government has entered involves graver and more serious considerations. It is in contravention of the stipulation of the Treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, by which Russia and the other signatory Powers engaged, each on its own part, to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. In the Conferences of London of 1871, at the close of which the above stipulation with others was again confirmed, the Russian Plenipotentiary, in common with those of the other Powers, signed a Declaration affirming it to be "an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the Contracting Parties by means of an amicable arrangement."

In taking action against Turkey on his own part, and having recourse to arms without further consultation with his allies, the Emperor of Russia has separated himself from the European concert hitherto maintained, and has at the same time departed from the rule to which he himself had solemnly recorded his consent.

It is impossible to foresee the consequences of such an act. Her Majesty's Government would willingly have refrained from making any observations in regard to it; but, as Prince Gortchakow seems to assume, in a declaration addressed to all the Governments of Europe, that Russia is acting in the interest of Great Britain and that of the other Powers, they feel bound to state in a manner equally formal and public, that the decision of the Russian Government is not one which can have their concurrence or approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 19.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 161.)
Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE to request your Excellency to communicate to Prince Gortchakow my despatch No. 160 of this day's date, without offering any observations upon it, in the same way that the Russian Ambassador communicated to me on the 24th ultimo His Highness's Circular despatch of the 19th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 20.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 163.)
Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE received a telegram from the British Danube Navigation Commissioner, stating that he and the French Commissioner are now detained at Sulina, and are prevented from returning to Galatz by the sudden stopping of the navigation of the Danube by the Russian authorities.

The Commissioners state that they have telegraphed through Paris for a safe-conduct, and I have to instruct you to request that it may be granted.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 21.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 58.)
Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram of the 30th instant, in which you report that the Russian Agent in Egypt says that there is an understanding between England and Russia as to the passage of the Russian-China fleet through the Suez Canal; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have come to no such understanding with the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 22.

Lord Tenterden to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

(Confidential.)
Foreign Office, May 1, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my letter of the 30th ultimo, referring to the communication made by Her Majesty's Government to Hobart Pasha, I have to request that you will inform the Lords of the Admiralty that Mr. Layard, under date of yesterday, telegraphs as follows:—

"I communicated to Hobart Pasha the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 25th instant, and he would wish to take a few days to consider his decision."

Copy of Lord Derby's telegram referred to is annexed herewith for convenience of reference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 23.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 2.)

(No. 309.)
Constantinople, April 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adrianople respecting the murder of two Bulgarians near Tchilpan.

The supposed culprit has been arrested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASSAU JOCELYN.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Jocelyn.

Adrianople, April 17, 1877.

Sir,

IT having been reported to me that two Bulgarians had been barbarously murdered, their heads cut off and their bodies cut up and insulted by the Mustahfiz (soldiers of the Fora), some few days since at some village between Yeni-Mahallé and Tchilpan, in the district of Phillippoli, I left Adrianople on the 13th instant to make inquiries as to the truth of this report.

The result of my investigations into this matter at Yeni-Mahallé, Haulvat, and at Tchilpan, although confirming the fact of the double murder of the two Bulgarians, does not show that the bodies of the deceased were cut into pieces or insulted, and I am also satisfied that the crime was not committed by the Mustahfiz, as was at first reported to me.

The bodies had been buried about a week, when they were exhumed in my presence. They bore marks of having been stabbed in several places, their heads were cut off, but otherwise the bodies were not mutilated or cut into pieces.

In the course of my inquiries the following circumstances were related to me by Koliogla Veltcho, of Tchilpan, the father of one of the victims:—

It appears that some time since this man sold a horse for 398 piastres to a Turk named Kara Ali, also of Tchilpan, a gipsey, but not receiving payment, offered to take a cow in settlement, to which Kara Ali consented.

The evening of the 30th of March last, the animal being missing, Veltchoglu Irvan (the son of Koliogln Veltcho) and George Petko, a companion, set out in search of it, and, not returning, their bodies were discovered next morning about a mile outside Tchilpan by a peasant boy, who immediately gave notice to the authorities.

The cow having subsequently been found in the yard of the said Kara Ali, and a blood-stained knife, for which he could give no satisfactory account, having also been discovered in his possession, has led to his arrest.

He is now in custody on suspicion, and the Kaïmakam of Tchilpan told me that he strongly suspects him of being the murderer.

The victims were both married men; Veltchoglu Irvan leaving a widow and five young children, and George Petko, a widow and three children.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

No. 24.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 2.*)

(No. 310.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of a despatch I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, respecting an outrage committed on a Bulgarian family in the village of Zindjirli.

Mr. Calvert observes that generally there has been an improvement in the state of public security in the Sandjak of Philippopolis, but adds that considerable lawlessness exists in the district of Sofia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASSAU JOCELYN.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Consul Calvert to Mr. Jocelyn.

Sir, *Philippopoli, April 12, 1877.*

I HAVE to report that I proceeded on the 9th instant to the village of Zindjirli, eight hours distant from here, to inquire into a reported outrage.

The result of my investigations is not very satisfactory, inasmuch as the victims of the outrage, either through ignorance or fear, failed to give me any information that might help to identify their aggressors.

The facts appear to be as follows:—

At midnight, on April 2nd, six men, their features concealed by folds of cloth wrapped round their faces, broke into the house of Christo Boinoff, and demanded sixty liras. The money not being produced, they bound Christo and his mother, took them to the hill-side close by, and there tortured them with their knives and with a glowing iron which one of them heated in the embers on Christo's hearth.

Christo protesting that he had nothing to give them, they left their two victims bound and returned to the house. Christo's wife and sister-in-law, who live with him, had meanwhile fled; the robbers ransacked the dwelling, and found 600 piastres and some ornaments composing Christo's wife's trousseau. This booty they appropriated, but before withdrawing they told Christo they would return in a week, and if then the whole sum demanded was not forthcoming, they would kill him.

The most remarkable fact of the affair was that the malefactors remained two hours in the village; the cries of Christo and his family were heard by all the inhabitants, but not a man dared to stir from his house, much less go and give the alarm at the neighbouring village of Keusseler, where there were some police.

The only person on whom there appears to rest any suspicion is a Bulgarian of Keusseler, who, according to Christo, saw him unearth the hoard which he (Christo) had buried before the insurrection. Besides this man, however, three individuals have been arrested in connection with this affair—two Turks and one Christian, all of Keusseler.

The Bulgarians of this village are notorious bad characters. Often the Christians of Zindjirli have complained to me of ill-treatment at the hands of their brethren of Keusseler. The latter throughout the events of last May made common cause with the Turks, and were allowed to retain their arms.

At Karlovo, where I slept on this journey, a Bulgarian peasant of Keusseler came to complain to me that on Sunday night last his stable was set fire to and ten head of cattle belonging to him burnt to death. It is possible that the fire may have been accidental, but he attributed it to a Turk of Okdjilar, who some months ago stole one of his sheep, but was forced to give it up by the Ker-Aghassi of the district. The Turk having spent fifty piastres in trying to establish his right to the sheep, threatened revenge. Immediately on my return here I informed the authorities of these facts; an order was to-day issued for the arrest of the Turk.

I am glad to be able, notwithstanding the facts above recorded, to confirm my last reports with regard to the improved condition of public security to this district. During the last month, in spite of the summoning to arms of the "Mustaphiz," only two well-authenticated outrages have come to my knowledge, one being the affair at Zindjirli above stated, the other an assault upon a priest at Saremby, who was the other day slightly wounded on the head and arm by a "boylikdji," or assessor of the sheep-tax. In this case likewise the culprit has been arrested.

To judge of the frequency of crime, it should be remembered that the district of Philippopolis contains close upon 800,000 inhabitants. Nor should it be imagined that murderous assaults are the speciality of the Mussulmans; such crimes, particularly during the Easter and other fêtes, are not uncommon among the Bulgarians. But while every case of Mussulman misconduct is eagerly cited in proof of their depravity, it is not thought necessary to place on record the crimes committed by Christians.

The leading Bulgarians here and at Karlovo are still found depicting the state of the country as one of utter and rampant lawlessness. On my way to Karlovo, I had an opportunity of judging of the truth of this statement for myself. Among the hills and on the plain were large flocks and herds tended by (Christian) eight-or-ten-year old urchins, who seemed perfectly at their ease, while dancing and merriment, in honour of Easter, were going on unrestrainedly in every Bulgarian village I passed through. The Bulgarian peasants whom I questioned assured me everything was quiet in their vicinity; and yet the road swarmed with Mussulman conscripts, without police or military escort, plodding on foot to Philippopolis to be enrolled.

I believe the present improved state of things to be due to recent special instructions from the Porte, enjoining the strict maintenance of order. For some time after the repression of the Bulgarian rising, the Mussulman peasantry—not at ordinary times a lawless set—thought themselves justified in harrassing and persecuting those who had dared to strike at the Mussulman supremacy and faith; for they were told, and still believe, that the massacres began by the Christians were far more sanguinary than was really the case. They desisted as soon as the Government showed that it had forgiven the Christians, and would no longer allow them to be persecuted with impunity.

From all accounts, the state of the country beyond the Balkans still leaves much to be desired, and I should especially mention the town and district of Isladi (Zlatitza in Bulgarian), in the Sandjak of Sofia, where great insecurity is said to prevail. The Mussulmans of Isladi are renowned for fanaticism and truculence, and the Circassians (of whom there are large settlements in that part of the country) live by plunder, robbing even the Turks, when hard up for booty.

They are reported to have lately murdered two zaptiehs near Muhowo, a Bulgarian village of the Sofia Sandjak, which was partly burnt last May, and has suffered greatly from their depredations since the insurrection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. G. CALVERT.

No. 25.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 2.*)

(No. 32. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, April 21, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday afternoon Ali Saib Pasha, the new Commander-in-chief of the 3rd Army Corps, arrived here overland from Sofia, and that he at once entered upon his military duties. He will proceed to-morrow to Podgoritza to inspect the troops both there and at Spuz.

Dervish Pasha will leave in a few days for Salonica, having been named Governor General of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 26.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 33. Political.)
Scutari, April 22, 1877.

My Lord,

LAST week I had the honour to report to your Lordship that Prenk Bib Doda had written to the Austrian and French Consuls to acknowledge that further resistance on the part of the Mirdites was useless, and that my colleagues had communicated the fact to the local authorities; but it appears that the young Chieftian's letters are not only wanting in truth of details, but are also inexact exponents of the existing state of affairs in Mirdicia, and most unsuitable guides as to his intentions.

Instead of the Mirdites having decided to cease all resistance, they have offered opposition to the progress of everyone of the Turkish forces converging towards Orosei, and they attacked one of the battalions that was coming from Prisrend to Miet and Scutari.

This battalion, while passing through the defile of Chiafa Malit, was suddenly assailed by about fifty Mirdites, who, before they could be dislodged, inflicted on the troops a loss of three killed and about ten wounded. The exasperated soldiers, it is asserted, pillaged and burnt all the houses on both sides of the high road as far as Miet, and a report persistingly repeated, requiring, however, further confirmation, credits them with having murdered a woman and three children. The bonsts of the men themselves would condemn them, as they declare that they decapitated at least fifteen Mirdites, but the Christian accounts do not admit this.

The force under Colonel Osman Bey has not moved from the position taken up by it at Castagneti eight days ago.

Brigadier-General Abdi Pasha, although several times unofficially reported to have entered Orosei, had four days since been obliged to make a movement which brought him to within three hours of Osman Bey's position, and Salih Pasha had met with detention before reaching Ner Fandina.

These two Pashas command 6,000 men, and, with the forces of Osman Bey and those coming from Prisrend and at Puka, the strength of the whole expedition against Mirdicia approaches nearly to 10,000 men. The foregoing particulars have been derived from a Turkish military source, and, as I know they are not greatly exaggerated, the slow progress made by the troops shows clearly that the Mirdites, who cannot number more than 2,000 guns, have not yet decided that resistance is futile.

On the 19th instant the Turkish authorities received a letter from Prenk Bib Doda, dated the 16th, affirming his loyalty to the Imperial Government and asking permission to come to Scutari to give explanations regarding his past conduct. A reply was immediately sent to him that he might rely on being treated with clemency, but, although the authorities are still awaiting his arrival, Prenk Bib Doda has not yet made his appearance.

On the day after the letter was written to the Turkish authorities, Bib Doda wrote again to the Austrian and French Consuls, giving them an account of the opposition that was being still offered by the Mirdites. My colleagues have thought proper to hide from me the fact that Prenk Bib Doda had thus written to them, and I have, therefore, been unable to inquire of them the meaning of a parargaph in his identical letters to them, in which he thanks them for favours received.

The young Chieftain's character is so little estimable, and his sense of truth appears so deadened, that perhaps all statements or allusions in his letters are of little value, and I would not have mentioned his having written to my French and Austrian colleagues had they not, as I have already said, allowed me to find out the fact from others than themselves.

The events in Mirdicia of the last fortnight show that the very first attempts of the Turkish Executive to prove that it is capable of maintaining an asserted authority have followed almost the same tracks as have led to the present state of things in Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

The Christian opponents, too, have adopted the usual course. They have, at one

and the same time, appealed for foreign support, intrigued with Montenegro, and declared themselves overcome by the Imperial forces.

The end of the armistice with Montenegro and the threatened war with Russia have made it more apparent than ever that the chance of the pacification of the Roman Catholics of North Albania, through the good offices of the Consular body here, ought not to have been allowed to escape.

I believe it is now almost too late to hope much good from local foreign intervention. The Turks will either gain their object through violent means, or the anarchy that will arise from their failure will open a door to plans and ambitions which had not yet been matured or which had hitherto not been acknowledged.

It has been the custom for those who, like the Austrians and Italians, know this country best, to call it wild, inclement, and unproductive, and inhabited by uncouth and intractable people.

It is, on the contrary, most fertile and susceptible of being developed into one of the most productive provinces of Turkey in Europe. Its climate resembles that of Tuscany, and, with proper attention to the flow of the rivers, its plains would become lesss malarious. Its forests are even now attracting European attention, and coal and other minerals are known to abound. Its lakes and rivers supply Southern Italy and Servia with many kinds of salted fish. The Albanian peasants are frugal and industrious, cultivating their soil with care and intelligence. They are at the same time physically a fine race and brave. All these qualities make them a valuable population, and one that a good Government could very quickly use to its own advantage.

The ports of the coast are now called dangerous roadsteads, but with little expense most of them could be made to vie with the best in Dalmatia, and the River Bojana and the Lake of Scutari, by proper dredging, could be quickly opened to large sea-going steamers.

The possession of Albania, after its port and roads have been established, would carry with it the trade of the whole of European Turkey lying immediately behind it, and when ultimately, railways shall have traversed Asia Minor, one of the shortest routes to Western Europe from the far East will necessarily be the crossing from Albania to Bari in Italy.

The advantages now secured by Salonica through its railway into the interior of Bulgaria and old Servia, will at once revert to North Albania when an enlightened Government shall have furnished it with the facilities to transit which it should offer.

All these facts must be well known to Austria and Italy, and the jealously evinced of each other by their agents here is not personal.

Austria has assumed for a long time past, and at considerable cost to herself, the official protection of the Roman Catholic Clergy in the whole of the province; and Italy, notwithstanding this (through the Franciscan missionaries, who are numerous, and all Italians), also exercises considerable influence as a Roman Catholic Power.

The progress of the present state of things may very shortly lead one or the other of these countries to endeavour to forestall the other here, and for those who hold that this danger ought to be averted, the best means of doing it lies in giving consistency to the self-government which is already possessed in a rough way by the Roman Catholic mountaineers, and in thus maintaining the connection with the Ottoman Empire.

The Porte has stated that past experience does not encourage it to form a second Montenegro.

That Principality has not emanated from the will of the Ottoman Government, but against it.

Opposition will form a similar mountain organization in North Albania, but intelligent concessions can only produce an Administration like that of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 27.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 102. Political. Confidential.)
Cairo, March 22, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Khedive sent Chérif Pasha this morning to ask if he could speak to me.

I found that he wanted to consult me upon an important communication that my French colleague had made to him yesterday by order of his Government.

Baron des Michels was desired to remind His Highness that the revenues of Egypt

did not belong to him but to his creditors, with whom he had contracted solemn engagements which France expected him before all to fulfill. That the dispatch of any assistance to Turkey in the shape either of troops or money would, in the opinion of the French Government, be incompatible with his maintenance of these engagements, and that he would be perfectly justified, upon these grounds, in refusing to comply with the demands of the Porte.

But Baron des Michels went further, and, "as a friend and well-wisher of Egypt," warned the Khedive of the very serious risk he would run in actively interfering in favour of Turkey in the present phase of the Eastern question, whereby he would only expose Egypt to the danger of a blockade, if not of a bombardment of her ports, and to the stoppage of all her commerce. The right of Russia to resort to such reprisals could hardly be challenged, but France and England could not view them with indifference, and they might provoke a foreign intervention which might be ruinous to His Highness. He therefore strongly counselled His Highness to pause and reflect twice before he interfered at all in the matter.

In reply to the Khedive's question whether the latter part of Baron des Michel's communication was the expression of his personal opinion, or that of his Government, he replied that it was that of his Government; and he added that, knowing, as he did, the perfect identity in view of England and France upon the Eastern question, he believed that Her Majesty's Government shared this opinion, even though I might not be instructed to speak out as openly as he was authorized to do. In Turkey, he said, circumstances had made England just now the leading exponent of the views of the Western Powers; but in Egypt the task fell to France.

His Highness, after repeating this conversation to me, said that he did not desire to ask my opinion as to what assistance he ought to send to Turkey at the present crisis. His sense of his duty upon this point was sufficiently clear; but he did wish to know whether it was true that, in fulfilling his undoubted obligations towards his Suzerain, he would seriously displease England, and whether I had received any instructions in this sense, or if I thought that Baron des Michels had faithfully represented the views and opinions of Her Majesty's Government; for, if so, it placed His Highness in a very serious dilemma.

I replied that, if Her Majesty's Government had any communication of this nature to make to His Highness, they would naturally entrust it to me; that I had received no such instructions, nor any that authorized me to give, even if asked, far less to proffer, any advice at all upon the delicate question of the duty of the Khedive towards the Porte at the present crisis.

His Highness thanked me for this answer, which was what he expected, and proceeded to say that, whatever assistance either in troops or money he might send to Turkey, would not interfere with the fulfilment of his financial engagements, which, war or no war, would be punctually met; and that the measure of such assistance would be the extraordinary resources that could be raised either by voluntary loan or subscriptions in the country, which had not yet been decided on. His Highness did not seem much appalled at the threat of a possible Russian blockade or bombardment of his ports; although, he said, the same danger had been strongly hinted at by the Russian Agent, but he was certainly nervous about Baron des Michel's declaration that Her Majesty's Government endorsed the views he expressed; and it is not to be wondered at, when Chérif Pasha tells me in confidence that, within the last day or two, the Khedive has received, in answer to his promise to give what assistance he could within the limits of possibility, a peremptory summons from the Porte to inform them "avant le coucher du soleil" of the exact number of troops that he would be prepared to send to Turkey. The question is now under the consideration of the Council of Ministers.

It seems to me, therefore, that those neutral Powers who desire to prevent the Khedive from sending assistance to the Porte should, out of consideration for his recognized obligations towards his Suzerain, and the great pressure put upon him to fulfil them, rather use their influence at Constantinople to induce the Porte to forego their demands than unduly press the Khedive to refuse to yield to them.

I should add that I have repeated to Baron des Michels the Khedive's version of his language regarding the views of England, and that while he repudiates having spoken in the name of Her Majesty's Government, he admits having said that "sachant la France en communauté d'idées avec l'Angleterre dans la question d'Orient, il ne pouvait supposer que le Gouvernement Français donnât des conseils qui choqueraient les idées de celui de l'Angleterre."

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 28.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 2.*)

(No. 114. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April 23, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a note which I received last night from Prince Nicholas, detailing the motives which led His Highness to recall his Delegates from Constantinople, and copy of my reply, stating that I would forward the communication at once to Her Majesty's Government.

Prince Nicholas explains in this note that he would have been willing to make further concessions on the purely territorial conditions which he had put forward, had the Porte shown any disposition to meet his views as to the return of the refugees and the future position of the Kutchi. The rejection of these two essential points rendered further negotiation impossible.

The Prince adverts to the probably imminent recommencement of hostilities, and to the great disproportion of the respective forces; but says that, even singlehanded, Montenegro accepts the conflict, trusting that, in case of a reverse to the Montenegrin arms, Christian Europe will come to the rescue of the women and children in the Principality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 28.

The Prince of Montenegro to Mr. Monson.

M. le Consul-Général, *Cettigné, le 2/14 Avril, 1877.*

PENDANT le cours des négociations infructueuses, qui ont eu lieu entre la Porte et le Monténégro pour le rétablissement de la paix, je vous ai donné communication, à diverses reprises, pour votre information, et celle du Gouvernement de la Reine, soit des pourparlers pour la fixation du lieu de réunion, soit des instructions primitivement données à mes Délégués à Constantinople, soit de celles que je leur ai subséquemment envoyées, pour les autoriser à faire certaines concessions. Je suis convaincu qu'il doit avoir été rendu unanimement justice à l'esprit de modération dont j'ai fait preuve constamment; et cependant on ne sait pas encore complètement jusqu'à quel point j'ai été dans la voie de la conciliation; car je n'ai pas pu faire connaître les ordres confidentiels donnés à mes représentants (pour entrer dans les vues des Puissances), pour leur permettre de céder éventuellement encore davantage sur les questions purement territoriales. Si nous avions rencontré chez nos adversaires des dispositions semblables, l'Europe aurait eu l'occasion de se convaincre, par les faits, de l'entendue et de la sincérité de mon bon vouloir.

Il y avait, néanmoins, deux points de toute importance sur lesquels il ne m'aurait jamais été possible de transiger: les conditions du rapatriement des Herzégoviniens, et la situation à faire à la tribu des Kutchi; sur ces deux questions je suis assuré que le Gouvernement de la Reine ne pourra qu'approuver mes résolutions.

J'ai insisté dès l'origine sur ce qu'il ne m'était pas permis de renvoyer dans leurs foyers les 90,000 Herzégoviniens réfugiés sur notre territoire sans m'être positivement assuré qu'ils trouveraient chez eux, non-seulement la sureté pour leurs personnes, mais les moyens indispensables de vivre. A mes instances à ce propos, je n'ai pu obtenir d'autre réponse qu'une promesse vague d'armistice, et la déclaration que, quant aux moyens de subsistance, les émigrés rentrants devraient s'en remettre à la générosité de la Sublime Porte. Or, je sais malheureusement trop bien ce que cela signifie. J'ai pourtant fait encore une tentative pour atteindre le même but d'humanité, tout en ménageant la susceptibilité de la Turquie; j'ai offert à celle-ci de me contenter des arrangements qu'elle prendrait, à cet effet, vis-à-vis de telle ou telle des Puissances en mon lieu et place; je n'ai pas même reçu de réponse à cette proposition. Le rapatriement des réfugiés, condition essentielle de toute paix, est donc devenu impossible.

Il était également impossible que j'abandonnasse la tribu des Kutchi, que les Turcs, par leurs violences, ont forcée à se soulever, même avant le commencement de la guerre, et qui s'est donnée à moi de son plein gré. Toute cette population, de près de 5,000 âmes, est déterminée à quitter son pays plutôt que de rentrer sous le joug. N'ayant pas, dans mon petit Etat, de territoire où je puisse les établir, je dois persister à exiger leur affranchissement. La Porte n'a jamais voulu entendre parler de céder sur ce point.

C'est sur le refus absolu de la Turquie de m'accorder ces deux conditions les plus essentielles, que j'ai dû renoncer à faire sur d'autres des concessions devenues inutiles, et que j'ai rappelé mes Délégués.

Voici dix jours que l'armistice a été dénoncé par le Grand Vizier, et, quoiqu'il n'y ait eu jusqu'ici aucune rencontre, les concentrations de troupes qui se font tout autour de nous, nous montrent que nous allons être attaqués de tous les côtés. Le Monténégro, exposé seul à l'effort de son puissant ennemi, va avoir, comme tant de fois déjà, à défendre son existence.

Il rentre dans cette lutte disproportionnée sans alliance aucune, comptant seulement sur le dévouement et la valeur de ses fils; mais avec l'espoir que l'Europe Chrétienne, qui sait ce que sont nos ennemis, viendra, en cas de revers, sauver les femmes et les enfants que nous laissons derrière nous.

Je vous prie de vouloir bien, M. le Consul-Général, transmettre cette communication au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine; et je saisis, &c.

Le Prince de Monténégro,
(Signé) NICOLAS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 28.

Mr. Monson to the Prince of Montenegro.

Cettigné, le 23 Avril, 1877.

Monseigneur,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de la note que votre Altesse a daigné m'adresser en date du 21 courant, et dans laquelle elle a bien voulu me faire l'exposé des considérations qui ont motivé le rappel des Délégués qu'elle avait chargés de négocier à Constantinople le rétablissement de la paix entre la Turquie et le Monténégro.

Me conformant au désir exprimé par votre Altesse, je m'empresse de transmettre à mon Gouvernement, par le courrier de ce matin, copie de cette communication.

Je prie, &c.
(Signé) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 29.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 115. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April 22*, 1877.

SOME days ago Prince Nicholas informed me, confidentially, that it was his intention to address a Circular to the Great Powers before the arrival of M. Yonine, the Russian Agent, who would certainly protest against any such step. The Prince added that my Austrian colleague also deprecated his doing so as useless, but with the unavowed idea, as His Highness imagined, that the sole glory of a possible pacific arrangement might thus be prevented from accruing to the Austro-Hungarian Government, through the opportunity which Count Andrassy will have of treating with the Delegates at Vienna.

The Prince having asked my opinion as to the policy of this Circular, I replied that I thought that it could do no harm that he should lay his case before Europe in the manner in which it presented itself to him.

His Highness' Secretary read to me, confidentially, yesterday morning the draft of the Note; asking me, on the Prince's behalf, to suggest frankly any alterations which I might think advisable. I did not, however, see any great necessity for hostile criticism; the language used appearing to me to be sufficiently dignified, and the statement of facts incontrovertible.

The penultimate paragraph, which refers to the isolated position of Montenegro, and to the eventual claim of the defenceless women and children to European succour, is differently worded in the copy intended for Russia, but I was not allowed to see in what the difference consisted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 30.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 23. Political.)

My Lord, *Erzeroom, April 8*, 1877.

ON the 4th instant, Feizi Pasha (General Kollmann), called on me to ask me, in a friendly way on the part of the Governor-General, Ismail Pasha, why I was angry ("fâché") with his Excellency, and in what he had offended me.

I begged Feizi Pasha to assure his Excellency, that he was quite mistaken in supposing I was angry;—that I harboured no such feeling; but I supposed that he came to this conclusion from communications he probably had received from Constantinople based on my reports to Her Majesty's Embassy. I said I had certainly reported on the disordered state of this province, and on the neglect of business shown by the authorities, and I regretted to see that Ismail Pasha himself set the example of doing nothing; that I did not believe the Sultan sent him here to make his five prayers a-day and surround himself with Mollahs, whose counsel and advice alone influenced him. That not only all the representations I made in the interests of his country had been entirely neglected, though approved at the time by his Excellency; but nothing was done to maintain order in this province, or even in this town. That I was obliged to report all this neglect, and I did so.

Yesterday I called on his Excellency, who received me very cordially. He was profuse in his excuses respecting the neglect of business, which he attributed to the incapacity and want of zeal in his subordinates, whom he could not sufficiently control, as the military duties imposed on him had taxed his energies beyond their powers: but that now Ahmet Mukhtar Pasha was about to take the command of the army, he would be free to look after the civil administration. He also apologized for not having called on me but once since his arrival.

I told his Excellency that I accepted his assurance that he gave all necessary instructions; but I regretted to see his orders were not obeyed, and that no punishment whatever was inflicted on those who either neglected or disobeyed orders, and that I could not close my eyes to the fact that the Christians were suffering from great oppression, and that the Government officials, instead of preventing abuses and rendering justice, encouraged and protected those who illtreated and robbed the Christians.

Ismail Pasha may be anxious to do what is right, but as his judgment is governed entirely by religious sentiment, it is hopeless to expect he will afford protection to the Christians; and as long as he remains here the civil administration of this province must go on degenerating.

Faïk Pasha, the second in command of the army, came in while talking with Ismail Pasha and joined in the conversation, and appearing to treat the topics under discussion lightly, made some very severe remarks regarding the want of order in the province, and seizing an opportunity when Ismail Pasha had absented himself to say his prayers, he assured me that I had not made a single unjust observation; but he added, whatever you say or do is quite useless, for the Mollahs have the upper hand in Turkey, and so long as they continue in power nothing will or can be done to ameliorate the condition of the people, or really improve the laws. They are the curse of the country, and till they are got rid of it is quite useless to hope for or expect any change.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 31.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 6. Political.)

My Lord, *Damascus, April 14*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at the Porte reporting the murder of a Jew by a Turkish fanatic.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Jocelyn.

Damascus, April 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 6th instant a Turkish private soldier stationed here, a native of Aleppo, seized a lance from an armourer's shop close to the Military Serail, and plunged it through a Jew who happened to pass near him, killing him. He then attempted the life of another Jew, but only succeeded in wounding him. He was at once arrested. He has since been tried before the Civil Court, and has confessed his crime with much self-glorification at having done, what he considers, a pious act; and although attempts have been made to get up a plea of insanity he declined to avail himself of this excuse.

During the trial attempts were made by the fanatical element of the population to influence the verdict by anonymous placards threatening, in case he was executed, to destroy the Jewish quarter of the city.

The Vali, however, pressed on the trial, and sentence of death was passed by all the members of the Court save one, who expressed his belief in the insanity of the accused.

In consequence the final sentence has been suspended, pending the arrival of information from Aleppo touching the prisoner's sanity.

The Vali ascribes the conduct of the dissentient member to the influence of the fanatics of the city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 32.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 7. Political.)

My Lord,

Damascus, April 17, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople on the 14th instant, reporting my investigation of an alleged outrage by a Turkish officer in the Christian village of Buseir (Hauran).

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Jocelyn.

Damascus, April 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that about a month since an outrage upon a Christian woman by a Turkish officer in command of a detachment of cavalry was reported in this city to have taken place on the 4th March at Buseir, a Greek Catholic village of the Hauran, on the edge of the Lejáa (Trachonitis). The matter attained considerable notoriety, and found its way into the Syrian and Egyptian press.

My inquiries into the matter proved unsuccessful; and finding that the authorities had taken no decisive action in the matter, and that the accused was at liberty in Damascus, I called on the Governor-General on the 5th instant, and told him that in pursuance of your instructions I should repair to Buseir and investigate the matter. His Excellency complained that he could not get the woman or her friends to come forward; and said that all he knew proceeded from the report of the village Scheikh, in whose accounts there existed discrepancies. He believed, however, that the officer had attempted only to commit the crime; and that he was not under arrest. He assented to my remark that in this country no respectable woman would be found willing to testify to her own dishonour in a public Court of Justice.

I went to Buseir on the 7th instant, and investigated the matter. The details of the accusation, as given by the village Scheikh, Moussa Effendy Fellukh, a Christian, are

contained in the inclosure to this despatch. They are identical with those which found their way into the public press.

In making my inquiries I found that the Scheikh had well drilled most of his people to his own version of the affair; and it was only by means of severe cross-examination that a wonderful tissue of truth and falsehood became apparent. The difficulty in getting at the truth was not decreased by the great fear entertained of the Scheikh by those who could and would testify to it, and by the care taken to keep such out of the way. Luckily, the woman's friends hearing of my arrival, brought her to me from the recesses of the Lejáa, to which she had been taken by her husband; and her statement made matters clear.

The results of my investigation are that the woman was violated by a Turkish officer who, from all the evidence I could collect, was the one in command, namely, Raieff Effendy, Colonel Aghassi of Mounted Chasseurs, stationed at Damascus, and employed in police duties; that the outrage was committed through the direct instrumentality of the Scheikh of the village, Moussa, who by the exercise of his power lured her to his house, delivered her over to the Colonel Aghassi, and then fled and complained to the authorities. The part played by the Scheikh can only be explained in the absence of the evidence of the subordinate officers, in one or two ways. Either he was forced to act as he did by personal coercion and fears—the only evidence of which, resting on the testimony of himself and family is practically worthless; or that he in revenge for insults and threats used to discover the lair of certain Arab robbers in the neighbourhood, laid a trap for the officer into which he fell. I incline, however, to the former opinion.

The officer was placed under arrest the day I informed the Vali of my mission.

I have told the Governor-General in general terms the result of my inquiry, and I shall give him at his request a copy of the woman's statement to aid him in the investigation which he states he is making, as efforts of the authorities to get her evidence in any other way will, I think, be useless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Alleged Details of the Outrage at Buseir.

ON the 4th March, 1877, at 8 o'clock (2 P.M.), Raiff Effendy, a military cavalry Colonel Aghassi, accompanied by several mounted soldiers, came into Baseir, a village within the Mutsariflik of the Hauran, lodged himself in the house of Moussa Effendy Fallukh, a respectable Christian of the district, and a Greek Catholic member in the Administrative Medjliss there, visited several houses in the village, and on seeing fire-arms in some of them, said to the housekeeper, "Why do you keep them? You should give them up to me." In one of the houses which this officer went into he met with a respectable woman and immediately tried to persuade her to give up her honour by paying some money, but she threw it at him and insulted him so that he departed home, and informed Moussa Effendy Fallukh of the insult only. They returned together, and the officer pointed her out to him. Moussa Effendy, in threatening to punish her with a stick for the officer's satisfaction, was stopped by his saying, "She is a poor woman, don't do it." They then both left her and returned home. At 3 o'clock after sunset (9 P.M.), this Colonel Aghassi requested Moussa Effendy to summon the woman in order to give her some advice, so that she should not commit herself again to insulting the officers. Moussa seeing the circumstances called her through the nattour (village servant). She came in and many persons were present. Raief Effendy said to her, "Why did you refuse to take the money which I gave you and insulted me?" She replied, "I refused your gift and threw the money on the ground for the mere protection of my honour which you tried to induce me to give up to you, and I insulted you while I ignored you were a military officer."

The Colonel Aghassi ordered her to return home and she left. At 4 o'clock (10 P.M.) this officer turned to Moussa asking him about the actual station of the El Rakkide and El Lejáa (names of two Arab tribes), who some time ago killed a zaptieh. Moussa said they are in the Lejáa and sometimes came into the villages situated near the foot of it.

The officer said, "Get up and go now with the cavalry soldiers and point out to them their places." Moussa Effendy refused for reasons which he explained; the most important was that the Arabs on seeing him accompanying the soldiers would in future revenge themselves upon him and upon his people. The officer considered this refusal a reason for revenge, and at once struck him with a stick he had in his hand, tied him with a rope,

insulted his religion and worship, and left him under the guard of some soldiers. Then he summoned the unfortunate woman by force through his soldiers and the natoor of the village.

While coming along she kept crying out loudly, "Release me, the honour is for God and the Sultan" (an Arabic expression); but no protector came, and thus she was forcibly brought into the place where this Colonel Aghassi was and in this way she was violated by him.

This being done, a Mulazim, called Mahmoud Agha, came in, released Moussa Effendy, and ordered the soldiers to quit him. Moussa Effendy got up and immediately proceeded to the merkez of the Mutsarifiik at a place called Scheik Saad. This barbarous act occasioned the flight of several women and boys in the village and neighbourhood to the desert.

No. 33.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 26. Political.)

Beyrout, April 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch of the 16th instant, and its inclosure, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, reporting on a disturbance which has taken place at Mount Carmel between the Bedouins and the Christians and Jews of Caifa.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 33.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Jocelyn.

Beyrout, April 16, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have at this instant received from Consular Agent Finzi, reporting a disturbance at Mount Carmel between the Bedouins and the inhabitants (Jews and Christians) of Caifa, and I beg to call your attention to the attempt at interference on the part of the Mussulmans at Caifa which, in my opinion, ought not to be suffered to pass unnoticed, and I will bring the matter to the knowledge of the authorities of the vilayet without delay.

I quite agree with the views of Mr. Finzi as to the necessity for the presence of European vessels of war, on the coast of Syria, in case of a declaration of war which, to judge by the telegraphic information we receive, may be hourly expected.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 33.

Mr. Finzi to Consul-General Eldridge.

Acre, le 15 Avril, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous rapporter que Lundi dernier 9 courant a eu lieu une querelle sanglante au Hader du Mont Carmel, entre des Bédouins des environs de Caïffa, des Israélites, et des Chrétiens de Caïffa.

La querelle a commencé entre les Bédouins et les Israélites qui se trouvaient au Hader, et ensuite des Chrétiens se sont mêlés pour protéger les Israélites.

La collision a eu lieu à coups des pierres, restant blessés deux Chrétiens et dangereusement un Bédouin.

A la suite de cela les Musulmans de Caïffa auraient eu l'idée de faire quelque démonstration contre les Chrétiens de Caïffa; mais la présence à Caïffa du "Torch" et d'une frégate Allemande l'ont fait rester tranquilles et l'affaire a été étouffée sans bruit.

Hier soir on a repandu la nouvelle provenante d'avis de Beyrouth que la guerre a été déclaré entre la Russie et la Turquie.

Jusqu'à présent le Gouvernement local se trouve bien disposé à maintenir le bon ordre; mais si la dite nouvelle est certaine, je suis d'opinion que la présence de quelque navire de guerre Européen serait nécessaire pour surveiller la tranquillité des Chrétiens et Européens demeurant dans ces contrées.

Je suis, &c.

(Signé) M. D'A. FINZI.

No. 34.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 25. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, April 20, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 18th, I have just telegraphed:—

"Baron Molinari, Governor of the Croatian frontier, has written to the Austrian Consul here that, on the 11th March, some hundreds of Mussulmans of Kulen Vakuf attacked the inhabitants of Otchievo, said to have taken no part in the revolt, carried off some 400 head of cattle, and killed Vaso Karanovich.

"Neither myself nor colleagues have heard anything of the massacre of a bridal procession at Glamosh. Both places are in the midst of the disturbed country, and anything is possible. I telegraph to-day to Mr. Freeman to go to Glamosh and inquire into the matter."

I had not seen the article in the "Manchester Guardian" reporting these affairs, or I should have reported on them immediately. I have not hesitated to send Mr. Freeman to Glamosh, because it seems to me highly desirable that the truth regarding such an outrage as the massacre of a bridal procession should be ascertained.

I cannot help, however, again remarking that all these statements must be received with great caution, as they all emanate from purely Serb sources, interested in making the most of everything, and not hesitating to invent when something to exaggerate is wanting.

All my colleagues last night remarked to me on the absurdity of most of the statements regarding Bosnia which appear in the newspapers, and the utter ignorance and malevolence displayed by most of the writers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 35.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 26. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, April 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a very interesting despatch, of 17th April, I have just received from Mr. Vice-Consul Freeman.

With regard to the idea of an Austrian occupation of Bosnia, it would be absurd on the part of the Turks, if war breaks out with Russia, to attempt to oppose it; and while I was at Constantinople, in the course of several conversations I had with several Turks in high position, it seemed to be admitted that it would be utter folly to attempt to oppose both Russia and Austria; and that, in the case of any intention manifested by the latter Power of occupying Bosnia, it should rather be received in a friendly spirit, and efforts should be made with a view to securing that it should only be temporary, and, as it were, in trust, until such times as order might be restored.

I should think that, without tortuous intrigues with Montenegro, the state of affairs on her Croatian frontier would be quite sufficient excuse for Austrian occupation, if she desires to achieve it, and I really do not think that the inhabitants of this country would now lift a finger to oppose it, unless forced to do so. They feel, both Christians and Turks, that at least it would bring them relief from the present intolerable state of affairs, and security for what remains of their property.

The opinions expressed by Mr. Freeman's Mussulman friend I believe to be those which now influence all who have any property still remaining.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Vice-Consul Freeman to Consul Holmes.

Mostar, April 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that four pieces of Krupp field artillery, with their full complement of men and horses, have arrived here from Travnik, and, together with the two previously here, have been sent on to the camp at Blagaï. Such pieces would be quite useless in an aggressive war against Montenegro, and, whatever the real reason, it seems to be the impression here that they have been brought for defensive purposes in the event of an attempted occupation of this province by Austria.

The authorities here have received information that 4,000 cases of cartridges, with the mark of the Imperial Austrian Arsenal, have lately been landed at Cattaro for Montenegro, and Turkish agents in Dalmatia affirm, with what truth of course I cannot say, that it is the intention of Austria to covertly assist Montenegro to occupy some fortified town in the Herzegovina, that she may have a plausible excuse for armed intervention; as she would then aver that the extension of Montenegrin authority along her frontiers being fraught with danger to herself, and the Ottoman Government being powerless to stop it, she must assume the responsibility of doing so herself.

The Mustahfiz of the Kaza of Mostar were called out last week, and have also been sent on to the camp at Blagaï. There are about 1,200 men inscribed on the rolls of this district, but nothing like that number has yet been embodied. The native Mussulmans display no eagerness to recommence the war with Montenegro. The higher classes of those destined to serve in the Mustahfiz try to procure substitutes, notwithstanding that it is contrary to regulation, and others, who cannot afford to thus obtain their release, keep out of the way, and otherwise endeavour to avoid serving. The Mushir, in consequence, summoned a few days ago some of the leading Mahommedans of this town, and upbraided them for their want of patriotism. He told them that soldiers had come from all parts of the Empire to shed their blood in their cause, while they themselves seemed to shrink from making any sacrifices whatever. But the truth is, they have already made so many and such great sacrifices, and have experienced such heavy pecuniary loss, that they are quite disheartened, and would, I believe, if they dared acknowledge it, accept any solution of the present difficulty sooner than the sword.

I lately had a conversation with one of the largest and most influential landed proprietors in the Herzegovina, whose name, however, I refrain from mentioning. On the subject of concessions to Montenegro he said that the feeling in the country was that the only result would be to strengthen Montenegro and increase the Porte's difficulties in the future, as sooner or later there would undoubtedly be a repetition of late events. But he said it Europe would effectually disarm Montenegro, not allowing so much as a rifle in the country, and the Porte would disarm her own populations, he would be willing to see half the Herzegovina ceded to Montenegro, and he for one would gladly give up the half of his own property, as then he could at all events cultivate the remainder in security.

I asked him if he thought peace being restored, the Christian refugees would return to the country. He replied most emphatically, no; nor, he said, did the landed proprietors in general desire it. All confidence between them is destroyed, and they both alike mistrust the promises of the Government. The proprietors would be obliged to rebuild the peasants' houses and provide the necessary cattle, implements, and seed, and they had no security that before two or three years had expired the insurrection would not again break out and all their property once more destroyed. He said that he was determined to get on as he could with a few Mussulman families; his income would be reduced but so would his risks. I replied that that was all very well as regarded himself or any other individual person, but it offered but a poor prospect for the general prosperity of the country or the well-being of the Government. He answered that as matters stood every one must regard his own personal interests. I much fear that similar opinions to these are entertained by a majority of the landowners in the Herzegovina.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 36.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Erzeroum, May* 1, 1877.

SERIOUS battle yesterday fifteen miles in advance of Kars. Turks routed. Twenty battalions cut off. Must surrender. Kars blockaded. Communication cut off. Commander-in-chief was in Kars during the battle. It appears ( ) in Kars, which will be probably stormed immediately. Russians have heavy siege-train. Russians have passed Bayazid; are marching on Topra Kaleh. Turks retreating on Delibaba. Russian column marching on Ardahan have reached Oldjick. Great excitement. Panic high. Population being armed and sent to work on Devehbon works, eight miles from this. Head-quarters will be probably transferred to Erzinjan.

No. 37.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May* 1, 1877, 6 P.M.

FOLLOWING received from Consul at Erzeroum dated yesterday:—

"Action fought on 28th at Emirhan in Ardahan. Authorities plead ignorance of result. Have seen Governor-General. Said to me, 'We are ruined.'"

No. 38.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May* 1, 1877, 7 P.M.

TURKISH Government has requested Mr. Foster to submit following to Her Majesty's Government:—

The interest and sinking fund of the Turkish 1855 Loan guaranteed by England and France amounts to 250,000*l.* sterling, of which 72,000*l.* is paid by the balance of Egyptian tribute, and the rest out of produce of certain tithes and Customs duties.

1. Would English and French Governments consent that the whole of the 250,000*l.* shall be charged upon tithes and Custom duties, thus freeing the 72,000*l.* of the Egyptian tribute for the purpose of being applied as a partial guarantee for a loan the Government desires to raise?

2. Would English Government enter into any arrangement with the Turkish and Egyptian Governments by which direct transmission of the Egyptian tribute to the Bank of England would be secured in such a manner as to be entirely free from interference on the part of the Turkish Government until all the loans guaranteed by the tribute are completely repaid?

No. 39.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Pera, May* 1, 1877, 11 P.M.

GERMAN Chargé d'Affaires is using threatening language to the Porte, insisting that Russians should be placed under the protection of Germany, that the Capitulations should be respected with regard to them, and that they shall not be expelled the country. I asked why his Government took this decided and hostile attitude. He answered, "Because we are with the Russians and not with the Turks." The policy now being pursued here by Germany is openly Russian. The Germans, at the particular request of the Emperor Alexander, have occupied Russian Embassy at Buyukdere.

No. 40.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 1, 1877, 11·30 P.M.*

TELEGRAMS from French, Austrian, and Greek Consuls at Toultcha state that orders have been given by the Turkish Commander-in-chief for the evacuation of the town by its Turkish inhabitants; if foreigners choose to remain they would do it at their risk and peril, the Turkish authorities only undertaking to protect them as long as they are able, and not holding themselves responsible when the Russians attack.

There are no means, the Consuls state, of removing by sea the inhabitants, who amount to 20,000. The Turkish families are leaving by land, and bands of armed Circassians are beginning to plunder. French and Austrian Chargés d'Affaires have represented this state of affairs to Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who undertook to send orders immediately by telegraph to authorities to afford every protection to foreigners if they left the city. At a meeting at the Embassy this evening of the above-mentioned Chargés d'Affaires and those of Germany and Italy, it was decided to ascertain from the Consuls whether the orders had been sent and obeyed, and if not, that we should make representations to the Porte on the subject.

No. 41.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 2, 1877.*

NAVIGATION of the Danube suspended by order of the Grand Duke. British interests affected. A firm attitude is being taken at Vienna. Perhaps Her Majesty's Government will also take action.

No. 42.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 2, 1877, 11 A.M.*

HAVING learnt that Shefket Pasha had been named to the command at Shumla, I remonstrated in the strongest terms with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier.

The latter has sent orders that the appointment is to be cancelled, and Shefket Pasha will be sent to a command at Baghdad, which is considered a kind of exile.

No. 43.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 1877, 2·15 P.M.*

BRITISH steamer "Milton," chartered to load coals for Odessa on 9th April, sailed from Leith at midnight on 24th April, before declaration of war was known. Will she be allowed to proceed to Odessa?

No. 44.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your secret telegram of yesterday, we have at present no special information to give respecting the movements of the Russian fleet in the Atlantic.

No. 45.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 3·40 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, you need only telegraph any very special war news.

No. 46.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2, 4·50 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 2, 1877, 11·20 A.M.*

COMMANDER of Her Majesty's ship "Cockatrice" at Sulina reports that Turks appear to be paralyzed, not attempting to defend Dobrutscha, having only small garrisons at Toultcha, Isaktcha, and Machin.

As the Sulina would be untenable owing to the blockading Turkish squadron, it is supposed to be the intention of Russians to attack squadron by means of sixteen Thornycroft torpedo launches now on the Danube.

No. 47.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 1877, 5·20 P.M.*

ANSWER to Prince Gortchakow's circular went by post last night. Telegraph as soon as you receive it.

No. 48.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 29th ultimo, Her Majesty's Government understand that there are only two Russian gunboats on the eastern side of the Suez Canal.

Does your information differ? If so, telegraph.

If Her Majesty's Government are accurately informed, there will be no question of a Russian fleet passing through the Canal. No advice, therefore, seems necessary at present.

No. 49.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 2, 1877.*

M. DE GIERS has sent copy of your Lordship's telegram requesting safe-conduct for English and French Danube Commissioners to Minister of War, and has telegraphed to Russian Consul at Galatz to use his good offices on their behalf.

No. 50.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 2, 1877, 7 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of May 2, Sir A. Buchanan telegraphs that "no information has been received at Vienna in confirmation of Colonel Mansfield's telegram communicated to me yesterday."

No. 51.

Lord Tenterden to the Hon. J. C. Vivian.

Foreign Office, May 2, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to state to you, for the information of Mr. Secretary Hardy, that his Lordship is of opinion that it would be desirable, during the continuance of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, that an additional Military Attaché should be appointed to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

If Mr. Hardy concurs in this view, I am to add that Lord Derby would suggest that Lieutenant-General Sir Collingwood Dickson, K.C.B., V.C., should be the officer selected for this appointment.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 52.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General Stanley.

(No. 5.)

Foreign Office, May 2, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 12, Political, of the 21st ultimo, reporting the apprehensions entertained at Odessa of a possible bombardment of the town by the Turkish fleet, and the steps taken by you with a view to the removal of the archives of your Consulate in case of necessity.

I approve your proceedings, as reported in this despatch; but, with reference to your request for instructions as to your future conduct, I have to state to you that it is not in my power to give you precise instructions as to the course you should pursue in the event of a bombardment, but that you must use your own judgment according to the circumstances of the case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 53.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 56. Political.)

Bucharest, April 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I BEG to transmit to your Lordship the translation of a Proclamation which was issued last night by the Government of Prince Charles.

The Roumanian Legislature meets to-morrow, and the Session will be opened by the Prince in person.

A French Government messenger will be leaving in a few days, by which opportunity I hope to have the honour to furnish your Lordship with some details respecting the various subjects of which I have, during the last forty-eight hours, forwarded the principal heads in cyphered telegrams.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Proclamation of the Roumanian Government on the passage of the Frontier by Russian Military.

(Translation.)

ON the morning of the $\frac{11th}{23rd}$ April, the Government received from the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire an invitation to come to an understanding with the Commander of the Turkish armies, his Excellency Abdul Kerim Pasha, to protect the Roumanian territory against the invasion of the Imperial Russian armies, which appears to be imminent.

In the course of yesterday and this morning, the Prefects of the districts contiguous to Russian Bessarabia informed the Government that the Imperial Russian army had

commenced the entrance into Roumania at three points: Bestimac, district Cahul, opposite the town of Leova, on the Pruth, where the "avant-garde" had arrived; Tabac, district Bolgrad; and Ungheni, the extremity of the railway, Jassy-Ungheni, the "avant-garde" having already entered Jassy.

Having these two facts in view, they having taken place before the Legislative Chambers can meet, the Government could not and cannot do otherwise than keep to the line of conduct traced out by the Legislative bodies in their last Session—the maintenance of the rights of Roumania and neutrality.

Until the opening of Parliament, which takes place the day after to-morrow, the $\frac{14th}{26th}$ April, when the country will be in a position to speak its decisive word, the Government, not wishing to take upon itself the responsibility of prejudicing this decision, has taken the following measures in the interest of public order:—

1. So as to avoid any conflict which might engage the nation before its voice has been expressed by its legislative organ, the Roumanian troops stationed on the frontier have received orders to withdraw into the interior, so as to avoid, on their part, any conflict which might draw the war into the interior of the country.

2. The Prefects of the districts on the frontiers, in the face of demands made by commanders of troops entered and which may enter, are not to interfere as agents of the Central authority, but have to restrict themselves to acting as simple police functionnaries' and by officious means to protect and warn the population against disorders and conflicts, leaving to the municipal authorities to represent the occupied communes "vis-à-vis" with the commanders of troops.

3. The population along the Danube has been made aware of the desirability of withdrawing, with their goods and property, to communes further from the frontier.

Any fresh incident that may happen will be immediately made known to the public.

(Signed) J. C. BRATIANO.
M. KOGALNICEANO.
J. DOCAN.
G. CHITU.
J. CAMPINENU.
General CERNAT.

Bucharest, April $\frac{12}{24}$, 1877.

No. 54.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 31. Political.)

Galatz, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 29, Political, of yesterday's date, I have the honour to report that, at about half-past 11 this morning, the French Consul called upon me and said that the Russian Consul had informed him verbally that vessels must clear out by 6 or at latest 7 P.M. to-day, or they would be "confisqués." I asked M. Champoiseau whether he was certain that this word had been used, and he replied that he was certain, but that it might very probably have been by mistake for "détenus," and this appears to have been the case, for, to a deputation of merchants who waited upon him, Prince Schokoskoff, the officer in command, replied that he was unable to grant a longer delay than till half-past 5 this evening, but that the rights of all such neutral vessels as remained would be respected. Meanwhile, after consultation, a letter, of which I inclose a copy, was addressed by the French to the Russian Consul. I have not, up to the present time, heard that any reply has been received, and I have strongly urged on the captains of British vessels to leave without delay.

I have also telegraphed to Ibraila in the same sense, but it is quite possible that, with the press of work at the telegraph office, my message may not arrive in time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

P.S.—Colonel Siborne and the French Commissioner are both down the river, either at Toultcha or Sulina.

Inclosure in No. 54.

M. Champoiseau to M. Romanenco.

Galatz, le 28 Avril, 1877.

M. le Consul,

SUR la demande de mes collègues, sollicités à ce sujet par leurs nationaux, j'ai l'honneur de vous prier d'intercéder auprès des autorités compétentes afin que le délai que vous m'avez annoncé ce matin avoir été fixé pour le départ des navires de toute nationalité soit prolongée de quarante-huit ou vingt-quatre heures tout au moins, l'exécution stricte de la mesure annoncée devant causer au commerce de préjudices incalculables.

Les Consuls font d'ailleurs dès à présent toutes reserves au sujet des conséquences d'intérêt privé que les dispositions portées par vous à leur connaissance pourront amener.

Ils vous seraient très obligés de vouloir bien accuser réception de la présente.

(Signé) CHAS. CHAMPOISEAU.

No. 55.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 158. Most Confidential.)

Rome, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

GENERAL COUNT MENABREA was good enough to call upon me this morning. His Excellency leaves Rome this evening on his return to London, where, however, he will probably not arrive till about the 7th of May, as he intends to stay a few days at Chamberg, where he will rejoin Countess Menabrea.

Being anxious to learn, if possible, the impression which General Menabrea is carrying away with him of his conversation with the leading members of the Government, in reference to the present and future policy of Italy in the war between Russia and Turkey, I made a few observations which induced his Excellency to speak to me very freely on this subject.

The substance of General Menabrea's observations may be stated in a very few words. Imperative necessity for, and firm determination of, Italy to avoid as long as possible being mixed up in this war; but should events occur which should make neutrality for her no longer possible, a deep-rooted conviction on the part of the Government that the best interests of the country require a cordial understanding with England.

Such were the ideas, his Excellency informed me, which he had invariably urged in his correspondence with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he found that they were fully shared both by M. Melegari, who had thanked him for the frankness with which he had expressed himself, and by M. Depretis, with whom he had had a long conversation on this subject.

General Menabrea added that he was happy to be able to say that the King also (his Excellency requested that I would consider this as strictly confidential) was entirely of the same mind, and was fully impressed with the importance to Italy of maintaining the friendship of England.

I told General Menabrea I was very glad to hear that the Italian Minister took so sound a view of the interests of their country, because, although there was no Power which had a more sincere friendship for Italy than England, there was none which could be a more formidable enemy to her. What he had said coincided with the opinion I had myself formed of the sentiments of Italian statesmen from my conversations with them, but that of course it was a peculiar satisfaction to me to have that opinion confirmed by so high an authority as himself. At the same time I would not conceal from him that every now and then I could not help having a feeling that the decisions of the Minister for Foreign Affairs were not altogether uninfluenced by the counsels of others who were not so much in favour of Italian policy being shaped upon the same lines as that of England, and I instanced my meaning by referring to the vacillation which had been shown in reference to sending back Count Corti to Constantinople.

I informed Count Menabrea of what your Lordship had said to M. de Martino, as to England not allowing Russia to take possession of Constantinople. His Excellency replied that he believed everyone must thoroughly understand this. The English policy in the East appeared to him perfectly simple, frank, and straightforward, and he had clearly explained it in Rome, as the result of his conversations with the members of Her Majesty's Government and other English statesmen: England had no intention of fighting Russia for the sake of the Turks, but there was a point beyond which it was

impossible for England, out of regard for her own interests, her commercial interests in the Black Sea, her communications with her Eastern possessions, &c., to permit Russia to advance.

I observed that at this point the interests of Italy, and I might say, of every other country, would become involved nearly as much as our own. Putting aside our own special position, what, I inquired, might be the consequence to Italy, and to Europe in general, of Russia having possession of Constantinople? To speak of nothing else, the deplorable condition of the Russian finances was no secret for anyone, and Russia, in possession of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, might find it a very convenient way of paying off her debts by levying a toll upon European shipping and commerce passing to and fro between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.

General Menabrea fully acquiesced in this view of the case, and added that similar apprehensions were not to be entertained of England occupying the same position.

His Excellency ended by again assuring me that I might rely upon it that the basis of Italian policy was a good understanding with Great Britain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 56.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 159. Very Confidential.)

Rome, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I CALLED upon M. Melegari the day before yesterday, to endeavour, in compliance with your Lordship's telegraphic instructions of the day before, to ascertain in what sense the Italian Government intended to reply to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 19th instant.

After some hesitation, his Excellency said that he must, of course, consult his colleagues as to the terms of the reply, but that, in his opinion, it might be confined to a simple acknowledgment, with the expression of regret that the refusal of the Porte to accept the Protocol of London should have forced Russia to have recourse to war, but that since it was declared, the Italian Government hoped that its final result might be in the interest of civilization and humanity.

I observed to M. Melegari that, by the words underlined, the Italian Government would proclaim that, in their opinion, it was Turkey who was entirely responsible for the war, and that Russia had no other alternative than to commence hostilities,—a declaration which I hardly thought his Excellency would be prepared to sustain, and which might, moreover, have very inconvenient consequences, as hampering the free and independent action of the Italian Government in some future stage of the contest.

M. Melegari replied that, as a matter of fact, it was the refusal of the Protocol by the Porte which was the immediate cause of the war, to which I answered, that whether that were so or not, it was quite certain that the refusal of the Porte had been to a great degree produced by the arrogance of the language of the Russian Declaration and the hostile measures which had been taken by that Government.

It seemed to me, in any case, I added, that it would be more suitable to the position of neutrality which the Italian Government intended to adopt, if the reply to Prince Gortchakow's Circular were drawn up in less compromising language; and I ventured to submit to his Excellency the following form of words as preferable to those he had dictated, viz., "a simple acknowledgment, with the expression of regret that the efforts of the Powers to preserve peace have been unsuccessful, and the hope that the final result of the war," &c.

M. Melegari said that, on the whole, this would, perhaps, be better, and gave my authority to inform your Lordship that it would be in words to the above effect that he should propose to reply. I left a copy of them in French on his Excellency's table.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 57.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 160.) *Rome, April 29, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Official "Gazette" of last evening contains an announcement from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, of which I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation taken from the "Italie," to the effect that war having broken out between Russia and Turkey, and Italy being at peace with both countries, the Government of the King and citizens of the Kingdom are bound to observe scrupulously the duties of neutrality, and warning those who may violate them that they will not be able to invoke the protection of the Government and its Agents, and that they will incur thereby the penalties provided by the general and special laws of the State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Extract from "L'Italie" of April 29, 1877.

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

LA guerre ayant éclaté entre la Russie et la Turquie, et l'Italie se trouvant en paix avec ces deux Puissances, le Gouvernement du Roi et les citoyens du Royaume ont l'obligation d'observer scrupuleusement les devoirs de la neutralité conformément aux lois en vigueur et aux principes généraux du droit des gens.

Ceux qui violeront ces devoirs ne pourront pas invoquer la protection du Gouvernement Royal et de ses Agents et encourront aussi, selon les cas, les peines édictées par les lois spéciales et générales de l'Etat.

No. 58.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 335.) *Paris, May 1, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAD last night the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram *en clair* of 6·45 P.M., and I immediately despatched telegrams in the same words to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Algiers, and to Her Majesty's Consuls at Ajaccio, Bordeaux, Brest, Calais, Cherbourg, Havre, Marseilles, and Nantes.

The following are the words of the telegram sent by me:—

"The Queen's Proclamation of Neutrality in the war between Russia and Turkey issued to-day. It is similar to the Proclamation in regard to the Franco-German War issued on the 9th August, 1870. Inform Vice-Consuls."

Of course I did not send the telegram to Her Majesty's Consuls in Cayenne, Martinique, New Caledonia, Réunion, and Cochin China, with whom, in fact, I am not in direct correspondence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 59.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 337.) *Paris, May 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the text of the Declaration respecting the foreign policy of the French Government, which was read by the Duc Decazes both in the Senate and in the Chamber of Deputies on their re-assembling yesterday after the vacation.

The Declaration contains a positive assurance that for seven years the relations between France and foreign Powers have never been better than they now are.

The views of the French Government are thus summed up:—

"Dans la question d'Orient la neutralité la plus absolue, garantie par l'abstention la plus scrupuleuse, doit demeurer la base de notre politique.

"La France veut la paix; la paix avant tous."

I inclose also a copy of a Circular despatch expressing the same sentiments which has been published in the unofficial newspapers, and which appears to have been addressed by the Duc Decazes to the French Representatives abroad on the 25th of last month.

The Duc Decazes also laid on the table of each of the Chambers yesterday papers relative to the Eastern question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 59.

Extract from the "Journal Officiel" of May 2, 1877.

LA parole est à M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. (Mouvement général d'attention.)

M. le Duc Decazes, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.—Messieurs, les espérances que j'exprimais au nom du Gouvernement, à cette tribune, le 3 Novembre dernier, au sujet du maintien de la paix en Orient, ne se sont malheureusement pas réalisées.

La guerre vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie.

J'ai l'honneur de déposer sur votre bureau les pièces les plus importantes de la correspondence que le département des Affaires Etrangères a entretenue avec ses agents depuis l'origine du conflit Oriental jusqu'à ces derniers jours.

Vous y trouverez dans son expression invariable l'indication des principes qui ont constamment inspiré notre politique.

Nous nous sommes associés à tous les efforts qui avaient pour but de résoudre par la conciliation les difficultés pendantes.

Mais si la diplomatie n'a pas réussi à prévenir les complications qui viennent d'éclater, nous avons du moins le droit de déclarer devant vous qu'elles nous trouvent libres de tout engagement. (Très-bien! très-bien!)

Il y a six mois, nous voulions la paix pour l'Europe et pour nous; aujourd'hui nous voulons la garder pour nous-mêmes. (Très-bien! très-bien!)

En vous rappelant ces paroles qui terminaient la déclaration du 3 Novembre, nous désirons ramener à de plus justes limites les préoccupations qui tendent à représenter l'ouverture des hostilités sur le Danube comme pouvant devenir le signal d'un danger ultérieur pour le repos général.

Sans doute il est prudent et sage de faire la part de l'imprévu dans ces graves conjonctures; mais nous n'en croyons pas moins obéir à un devoir de patriotisme en retenant votre attention sur la haute valeur des symptômes qui nous conseillent d'envisager la situation avec calme et liberté d'esprit. (Marques d'assentiment.)

Dès le début de cette crise nous nous étions trouvés en rapports amicaux et confiants avec tous les Gouvernements.

Nous avons pu constater alors combien ils étaient soucieux de mettre la paix du continent à l'abri des péripéties de la question d'Orient. Aujourd'hui nous nous retrouvons en communion d'idées avec eux pour exprimer le désir que la guerre soit localisée et pour espérer qu'elle conservera jusqu'à la fin les proportions dans lesquelles nous la voyons commencer.

En rendant hommage aux dispositions qui animent les Cabinets, nous pouvons ajouter qu'ils ne méconnaissent pas les nôtres.

L'Europe n'a pas manqué d'être frappée de la sincérité de notre attitude et de nos actes, ainsi que de notre volonté persévérante de rester en harmonie avec elle.

Nous en avons reçu l'assurance, et c'est ainsi qu'il nous est permis de vous dire que depuis sept ans nos relations avec tous les Etats étrangers n'ont jamais été meilleures qu'aujourd'hui. (Très-bien! très-bien!)

Cette affirmation acquerra plus de valeur encore à vos yeux si vous voulez bien remarquer que les Puissances qui nous avoisinent partagent avec nous le privilége de n'être engagées dans les événements actuels par aucun intérêt direct.

Leur langage ne laisse subsister aucun doute ni sur leurs sentiments pacifiques, ni sur le prix qu'elles attachent à l'affermissement de leurs bons rapports avec le Gouvernement de la République Française. (Très-bien! très-bien!)

Telles sont les déclarations que nous avions à cœur de faire devant les Représentants du pays.

Deux mots les résumeront et les compléteront.

Dans la question d'Orient, la neutralité la plus absolue, garantie par l'abstention la plus scrupuleuse, doit demeurer la base de notre politique. (Très-bien! très-bien! et applaudissements.)

La France veut la paix, la paix avec tous, et nous savons que nous pouvons compter sur votre concours pour lui en assurer les bienfaits. (Vifs et nombreux applaudissements.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 59.

Extract from Morning Papers of May 2, 1877.

LE Ministre des Affaires Etrangères a adressé aux Agents Diplomatiques de France à l'étranger la Circulaire suivante:—

"Monsieur, "*Versailles, le 25 Avril*, 1877.

"En présence des complications dont l'Orient devient le théâtre, je tiens à vous rappeler l'ordre d'idées dans lequel nous avons agi pour les prévenir, aussi bien que l'attitude que nous comptons observer dans ces graves conjonctures.

"Je ne remettrai pas sous vos yeux les péripéties d'un conflit qui est engagé depuis près de deux ans et qui n'a pas cessé, pendant tout ce temps, de tenir les Gouvernements en éveil. Désireux de conserver à l'Europe les bienfaits de la paix, nous avons prêté loyalement notre appui à tous les efforts tentés pour la sauvegarder ou par la rétablir. Nous y avions été sollicités et par le Gouvernement de la Sublime Porte qui, dès le premier jour, avait fait appel aux bons offices des Puissances, et par le Cabinet de de St. Pétersbourg qui, peu après, avait tenu à provoquer, sur les questions soulevées par le progrès de l'insurrection des Balkans, le concert de l'Europe tout entière.

"En nous mêlant aux négociations qui ont eu lieu depuis ce moment, nous avions à cœur de concourir à l'œuvre qui avait pour but de trouver un moyen de conciliation entre la Porte et ses sujets Chrétiens, et de fortifier l'accord des Puissances entre elles. Les difficultés, à coup sûr, étaient nombreuses; mais après avoir prévu que, si l'insurrection Herzégovinienne n'était pas promptement apaisée, elle ne tarderait pas à se développer et à troubler la tranquillité continentale, il ne nous était pas permis de nous laisser décourager dans l'accomplissement de cette tâche commune à tous les Gouvernements, et qui consistait à préparer et à maintenir leur union.

"Lorsqu'ils ont signé, après de longs pourparlers, le Protocole du 31 Mars, les Cabinets ont cru toucher au terme de leurs efforts patients. Nous avons donc appris avec regret que les Conseillers du Sultan déclinaient cette transaction, qui ménageait cependant à la Turquie un moyen honorable de résoudre pacifiquement les difficultés au milieu desquelles elle se débat.

"Au lendemain de la Conférence de Constantinople, la Porte avait déclaré qu'elle était d'accord avec les Plénipotentiaires Européens sur tous les points de leur programme, sauf deux.

"Dans sa Circulaire du 25 Janvier, 1877, elle se flattait qu'un dissentiment aussi restreint n'aurait pas pour résultat de lui aliéner les sympathies et la bienveillance de l'Europe, et elle indiquait aussi d'une façon indirecte l'opportunité de délibérations ultérieures qui achèveraient de lever les derniers obstacles à une entente complète.

"Le Protocole de Londres semblait devoir faciliter la réalisation de ce désir, car le texte auquel nous avons donné notre assentiment réduisait la substance des demandes et des conseils de l'Europe aux déclarations faites par les Délégués de la Turquie devant la Conférence de Constantinople et aux mesures intérieures plus récemment décrétées par le Sultan.

"Néanmoins, une interprétation contraire a prévalu à Constantinople, et elle a précipité les résolutions extrêmes qui viennent de fermer la voie à l'action diplomatique dans le sens où elle s'exerçait depuis deux ans.

"Après tant d'efforts pour écarter ce dénoûment, nous n'avons plus qu'à affirmer notre volonté bien arrêtée de demeurer étrangers aux complications qu'il peut déterminer.

"Veuillez donc le déclarer très haut. la politique de la France, c'est la neutralité la plus absolue, garantie par l'abstention la plus scrupuleuse. Le sentiment unanime du pays et de ses représentants, notre éloignement du théâtre de la lutte, et enfin la nature de nos intérêts essentiels, tout contribue à nous commander une semblable attitude, et

nous ne la modifierons que le jour où des circonstances nouvelles permettraient à l'action commune de l'Europe de préparer ou de faciliter le retour de la paix.

"Agréez, &c.

(Signé) "DECAZES."

No. 60.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 3.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 3 Mai*, 1877.

VOICI la notification officielle communiquée aux Représentants étrangers, et publiée dans les journaux, au sujet de l'état de blocus déclaré dans la Mer Noire.

Art. 1. Le Gouvernement Ottoman déclare en état de blocus tout le littoral Russe de la Mer Noire compris entre Tcharuk-Iou de la côte Adriatique et l'embouchure de Kilia de la Turquie d'Europe.

Art. 2. Le blocus ainsi établi commencera à être effectif à partir du 5 Mai courant (N.S.), et sera maintenu par une flotte Ottomane en force suffisante.

Art. 3. Un délai de trois jours à compter du 5 Mai (N.S.) est accordée à tous les navires marchands qui voudraient se rendre dans un des ports du littoral bloqué, et un délai de cinq jours à ceux qui voudraient en sortir. Passés ces délais, tout bâtiment qui chercherait à entrer dans les eaux investies ou à les quitter sera traité en ennemi.

Art. 4. Quant aux navires qui, étant en cours de voyage, ignoreraient l'état d'investissement, la flotte Ottomane à leur arrivée dans les eaux bloquées devra leur notifier le blocus. Si, après cette notification spéciale, ces navires persistent à avancer, ils seront considérés comme ennemis.

No. 61.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 2*, 1877, 11:30, A.M.

TURKISH Government has been informed from Berlin that the German Government insist upon protecting Russian subjects and interests in the Turkish Empire, and securing to them the privileges of Capitulations; and declare that any attempt to expel Russian subjects cannot be reconciled with position of Turkey among European nations.

German Chargé d'Affaires yesterday protested against seizure by Turkish man-of-war of a Russian ship at Sulina. German Government evidently intend to carry matters here with a high hand.

I have just been informed confidentially that the Porte will give way on this question of German protection.

No. 62.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 2*, 1877, 1 P.M.

TURKISH Government contemplate declaring Constantinople in state of siege, and a report to that effect has caused great alarm, especially to Europeans. I have strongly advised Porte not to take this step, which might lead to very serious difficulties with foreign Powers and other complications.

I have been told confidentially this morning that the Turkish Government will not adopt this measure unless Russians actually advance upon Constantinople, or other circumstances of a grave nature render it absolutely necessary.

No. 63.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3.)

Pera, May 2, 1877, 1·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Minister of War gives me the most positive assurances that there is no truth whatever in the reports sent from Erzeroum of a battle between the Turks and Russians, near Kars, in which former were defeated; and that the Government has received telegrams this morning from Moukhtar Pasha, who commands at Kars, stating that the Turkish army has not left that place, and that there has been as yet no fighting.

No. 64.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3.)

Pera, May 2, 1877, 6·15 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Erzeroom to-day:—

"Moukhtar Pasha retreated to Yenikeui. Russians at Chirpetli, twenty miles west of Kars. Circassians will not serve under Moussa Pasha. They suspect his being Russian spy. They await arrival of Shamil's son."

No 65.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3, *noon.*)

Berlin, May 3, 1877, 10·15 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informs me that he has told Turkish Chargé d'Affaires that the German Government do not contest the right of the Turkish Government to expel the Russians from Turkey, but that the refusal to admit the protection of Russian interests by a friendly Power is unusual, and calculated to estrange Germany, who is otherwise anxious to keep on the most friendly terms with Turkey.

No. 66.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3, 3·10 P.M.)

Pera, May 3, 1877, 11·20 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of 1st instant if a second gun-boat can be sent for the Danube, it might be well to place her at Kustendji, where there is an English colony and important English interests that may be exposed to danger.

A protest is being prepared for owners of railway, who are English, to present to Russian authorities in case they should seize or injure it.

No. 67.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3.)

Pera, May 3, 1877, 11·45 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT is of importance to have a better man at Salonica, and I propose, with your approval, to send Mr. Frederick Guarracino there to take charge of the Consulate, and Mr. Barker temporarily to Monastir, also an important place at this moment.

No. 68.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3.)

Pera, May 3, 1877, 12·20 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

LAST night some bakers' shops in Constantinople were entered by force by Mussulman population and the bread carried off, part on payment of half the price.

Bread riots which may have serious results are apprehended by some. Government unwisely has raised and fixed the price of bread.

No. 69.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 3.)

Teheran, May 3, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent me a Memorandum complaining urgently of the reoccupation near Mohamrah by Turkey of the recently formed islet in immediate proximity to the island of Khizr, which is undoubtedly, under Erzeroum Treaty, Persian territory.

The Turks are said to have withdrawn from its occupation last summer, under orders from Constantinople, issued in consequence of remonstrances from Persia.

The report of its reoccupation now has caused much excitement here.

The present is a most unfavourable moment for a movement of this sort on the part of Turkey, as it may lead Persia to despatch a force, believed to be already under orders, to the Kermanshah frontier, whose presence there could not fail to hamper Turkey, even if it should not actually cross the frontier.

No. 70.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Barrow.

Foreign Office, May 3, 1877, 5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IS there any truth in the report that a British steamer has been destroyed by a torpedo at Kertch?

No. 71.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

Foreign Office, May 3, 1877, 5·5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

I TELEGRAPHED to Lord A. Loftus to ask for a safe conduct to enable British Danube Commissioner to return to Galatz.

Russian Foreign Minister has communicated request to Minister of War, and has telegraphed to Russian Consul at Galatz to use his good offices.

Inform Colonel Siborne.

No. 72.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

Foreign Office, May 3, 1877, 6·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of 30th ultimo, Her Majesty's Government wish to be informed of the precise or alleged grounds on which the "Industry" has been detained.

No. 73.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1877, 6·55 P.M.

CONSUL at Galatz telegraphed on 30th April that British vessel "Industry" was at Ibraila, and that the Russian Consul and Commander, with whom he had had interviews, had refused permission for the vessel to descend the river.

Her Majesty's Government wish to be informed of the precise or alleged grounds on which the vessel is detained.

No. 74.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3, 7 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, May* 3, 1877, 4·35 P.M.

BRITISH Vice-Consul at Ibraila telegraphs, shots exchanged between two iron-clads and a Russian battery there. Small damage to the town.

No. 75.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1877, 7·30 P.M.

INDIA Office wish you to inform Captain Molloy that cost of Kashgar Envoy's journey from Constantinople will be defrayed from Indian revenues, on the understanding that he travels direct to England.

He will be regarded as the guest of the Indian Government during his stay here.

No. 76.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May* 3, 1877, 12·35 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, the information came from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that firm language is being held at Vienna about Danubian navigation.

Extreme section of Reds agitating to proclaim independence of Roumania.

Impossible to predict course of events.

No. 77.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, May* 3, 1877.

I AM informed that at Roustchouk loaded barges under neutral flag are being stopped. British owners of barges at Turno-Severin fear to move them.

No. 78.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May* 3, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday notes will be addressed by Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Russian and Turkish Governments asking for a declaration that the free navigation of the Danube will be re-established as soon as operations of war do not render its interruption indispensable.

No. 79.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rustchuk, May* 2, 1877.

CONSULAR Corps at Toultcha reports Governor has received orders on appearance of enemy to evacuate and destroy everything behind him. My French and Austrian colleagues have telegraphed home for safe-conduct from Russian Commander-in-chief for foreigners driven from Toultcha to Ismail. They have also applied for ship of war at Varna. English and French Commissioners gone to Toultcha in "Cockatrice."

No. 80.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 60.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1877.

I HAVE received your telegram of the 29th ultimo, in which you state that the question of allowing Russian men-of-war to pass through the Suez Canal will probably soon arise, and that the Egyptian Government are anxious to know the views of Her Majesty's Government on this point, and in reply I have to state to you that as Her Majesty's Government understand that there are only two Russian gun-boats on the eastern side of the Suez Canal, and there cannot, in consequence, be any question of a Russian fleet passing through the Canal from that quarter, I do not see any present necessity for offering advice to the Egyptian Government on the subject.

Should your information on this point differ from that received by Her Majesty's Government, I have to instruct you to communicate with me forthwith by telegraph.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 81.

The Earl of Derby to M. Gennadius.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1877.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, communicating to me the result of the investigation made by your Government into the report of the Hellenic Vice-Consul at Cavalla upon the Boulgoustra outrage, and I beg to return you my best thanks for this information.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 82.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 159.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1877.

COLONEL MANSFIELD reports from Bucharest by telegraph that a firm attitude is being taken at Vienna respecting the suspension, by order of the Russians, of the navigation of the Danube; and inquires whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take any steps in regard to the order, which, as he points out, affects British interests. Upon receiving this report, I directed your Excellency to-day by telegraph to inform me whether there was any truth in the rumour of the intention of the Austro-Hungarian Government to move in the matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 83.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.**

(No. 266.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 3, 1877.*

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in answer to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 19th ultimo, announcing that the Emperor of Russia had given orders to his armies to cross the frontiers of Turkey.

You are at liberty to communicate this despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 84.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 163. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 3, 1877.*

THE German Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and, after some conversation on the subject of the war, inquired what were the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the neutralization of the Suez Canal.

I told his Excellency that the subject was a very wide one, that it was certain before long to be debated in Parliament, and that I was not at present prepared to discuss it in detail.

He might, however, I said, inform his Government that to such a neutralization of the Canal as would close it against ships of war, leaving it open for mercantile purposes only, England would certainly be opposed.

I added that it was our intention to inform the Russian Government of the strong objection which we should entertain to any steps taken by them or by the Porte which would tend to interrupt the free navigation of the Canal.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY

No. 85.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 163.)
My Lord, *Rome, April 30, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 161A of the 25th instant, directing me to ascertain whether it is the intention of the Italian Government to return a reply to the Circular of Prince Gortchakow of the 19th instant, and if so, in what sense; and to inform your Lordship that Signor Melegari's original intention was to reply to this communication by a simple acknowledgment of its receipt, and the expression of a regret that the efforts of Europe to maintain peace had not been successful, but his Excellency informed me to-day that on further reflection it appeared to him the Circular did not require any answer at all, and that it was therefore his intention not to send one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 86.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 165.)
My Lord, *Rome, May 1, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 139 of the 20th of April, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Signor Melegari stated, in an interview I had with him yesterday, that the Turkish Government objected to Russian subjects in the Ottoman Dominions being under German or Italian protection during the war. They would remain

* Identic despatches were addressed to Lord Odo Russell, Sir A. Buchanan, Sir A. Paget, and Mr. Jocelyn.

on the same footing as Turkish subjects in Russia, viz., under the protection of the laws of the country.

In connection with this subject I gathered from his Excellency that he would wish the return of the Italian Minister to Constantinople to coincide with the arrival there of the new German Ambassador Prince Reuss.

There is evidently a disinclination on the part of the Italian Government to be the first of the Continental Powers to place their diplomatic representation at the Porte on its former footing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 87.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 4.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 2 Mai, 1877.*

LE Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité doit avoir eu connaissance du message que le Prince Charles a adressé à la Chambre des Députés réunie à Bukarest le 26 Avril. Les Principautés-Unies avaient été envahies deux jours avant et de plusieurs côtés par les armées Russes. La Sublime Porte est dès lors en devoir de considérer les idées énoncées dans ce message, et les actes du Gouvernement Princier qui en ont été, ou qui pourraient en être la suite, non comme émanant de la libre volonté des autorités ou des populations des Principautés, mais bien comme la conséquence directe de l'occupation étrangère. La triste situation où les Principautés se trouvent ainsi réduites était aujourd'hui un fait accompli. Il ne reste à la Sublime Porte qu'un devoir à remplir, celui de rappeler qu'elle a fait tout ce qui dépendait d'elle pour la prévenir, et qu'elle n'a encouru, à aucun titre ni à aucun degré, une responsabilité quelconque de ce chef.

Il ne dépendait pas de la Sublime Porte seule de reconnaître et de faire reconnaître par l'Europe la neutralité des Principautés. Si elle n'a pas cru devoir prendre dans les Conférences de Constantinople l'initiative de la proposition de la neutralité perpétuelle des Principautés-Unies, c'est que le but de la Conférence était tout autre, et que la Porte n'aurait pas été en droit de soulever de son propre chef des questions étrangères au programme de la Conférence. Elle craignait aussi, en abordant cette question dans un sens quelconque, de fournir de nouveaux motifs de mécontentement à la Russie qui, sans doute, aurait envisagé une pareille proposition comme une mesure dirigée contre elle.

La Sublime Porte était, d'ailleurs, convaincue que les Principautés, pour peu qu'elles en eussent la volonté, trouveraient toujours dans les dispositions du Traité de Paris des moyens suffisants pour faire respecter leur territoire, et que la Russie s'arrêterait elle-même devant la barrière que lui créaient des engagements pris vis-à-vis de toute l'Europe. Ces dispositions du Traité de Paris prescrivaient, en effet, aux Principautés de combiner leur action militaire avec celle du Gouvernement Impérial pour la défense de leur territoire, en même temps qu'elles interdisaient l'entrée des Principautés même aux armées de la Cour Suzeraine, et encore que l'ordre intérieur y eût été troublé, sans l'accord préalable de toutes les Puissances Signataires du Traité. En présence de stipulations internationales aussi explicites, il est impossible d'admettre l'excuse d'impuissance en droit ou en fait alléguée par le Gouvernement Princier de s'opposer à l'envahissement des Principautés. Il est tout aussi évident que la Russie, en entrant dans les Principautés comme elle vient de le faire, a violé des engagements internationaux non moins solennels que ceux qui auraient été le résultat d'une reconnaissance formelle de la neutralité de ce territoire.

D'un autre côté, le Gouvernement Impérial n'avait pas manqué de proposer au Gouvernement Princier de se concerter avec la Cour Suzeraine en vue de l'action militaire que nécessiteraient les circonstances; et, bien que cet offre ait été déclinée, la Sublime Porte n'en a pas moins adressé dernièrement encore au Gouvernement Princier l'invitation officielle d'unir ses efforts aux siens pour conjurer le danger commun. La réponse du Prince en face d'une invasion imminente a été absolument dilatoire. Votre Excellence en jugera par le télégramme de la Sublime Porte que je vous ai communiqué le 23 Avril, et par celui que je vous transmets ci-après adressé à son Altesse le Grand Vézir par M. Kogalniceano le 23 Avril pour répondre à l'offre de défense et de protection qui lui était faite.

La Sublime Porte a la conscience d'avoir scrupuleusement rempli ses devoirs de Gouvernement Suzerain envers les Principautés Unies. Il appartient maintenant aux Grandes Puissances amies d'apprécier si, en présence des entreprises de la Russie contre lesquelles la Sublime Porte proteste les armes à la main, l'attitude que le Gouvernement

du Prince Charles a gardée dans ces circonstances est vraiment conforme aux obligations qui lui incombaient. Tandis que la Sublime Porte offrait à ce Gouvernement les moyens de défendre le pays contre l'invasion de l'ennemi, les Ministres de Bucharest traitaient secrètement avec la Russie et concluaient, dès le $\frac{1}{13}$ Avril, la Convention qui vient d'être communiqué aux Chambres, et par laquelle toutes les ressources du pays étaient mises d'avance à la disposition de l'envahisseur. La publication de cette Convention a révélé une situation que la Sublime Porte était loin de soupçonner, et qui fait peser la plus lourde responsabilité sur un Gouvernement qui, oublieux de tous ses devoirs, n'a pas hésité à contracter avec l'étranger des arrangements inavouables ayant pour but de faciliter l'envahissement de l'Empire, trahissant en même temps les intérêts du pays, la confiance du Gouvernement Suzerain et les espérances que toute l'Europe avait fondées sur les institutions des Principautés-Unies. Le jugement qui doit frapper des actes, entâchés d'une déloyauté si patente, ne saurait être trop sévère.

En attendant, et bien que le message affirme que la Russie ait promis de ne pas entrer dans la ville de Bucharest, la Sublime Porte doit considérer le Prince, ainsi que les autorités légales du pays, comme se trouvant en la puissance de l'ennemi, et en conséquence comme usurpés sur l'autorité légitime les actes et décisions qui en émaneraient sous le régime de l'occupation et qui affecteraient directement ou indirectement les relations des Principautés avec la Cour Suzeraine.

Veuillez donner lecture et copie de cette dépêche à son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Annexe.

Le Gouvernement Princier a pris connaissance de la dépêche adressée par votre Altesse le 22 de ce mois à Son Altesse le Prince de Roumanie; et le contenu de cette dépêche, nous demandant de prendre les mesures militaires de concert avec les armées Impériales afin de repousser l'invasion Russe, est d'une nature trop grave pour que le pouvoir exécutif puisse prendre sur lui de se prononcer.

J'ai donc l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Altesse que le Parlement Roumain seul a droit de décider à ce que la Roumanie prenne part à la guerre et par conséquent sortir de la voie de neutralité qui lui a été du reste recommandée constamment par la Sublime Porte elle-même, ainsi que par les Puissances Garantes.

Le Parlement est donc convoqué en Session extraordinaire le 26 Avril. Aussitôt après la vérification du nouveau Sénat, la situation politique sera d'urgence communiquée aux Corps Législatifs, et tout en premier lieu la dépêche de votre Altesse. Immédiatement après, je m'empresserai de communiquer au Gouvernement Impérial la décision de notre Parlement.

Votre Altesse, aujourd'hui Premier Ministre d'un Gouvernement Constitutionnel et Parlementaire, ne saurait exiger du Ministre Roumain à ce qu'il viole les prescriptions d'une Constitution reconnue par l'Europe, et, sans l'avis de la nation, se prononce dans une affaire d'une importance telle que celle qui forme l'objet de la dépêche du Gouvernement Impérial.

Lettre explicative et détails par courrier.

No. 88.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha May 4.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 3 Mai*, 1877.

POUR faire suite à mon télégramme d'hier, je m'empresse de vous informer que, par suite de la Convention passée entre le Gouvernement Princier et la Russie le 16 Avril dernier ayant pour objet de préparer l'occupation par l'ennemi du territoire des Principautés, occupation qui s'est réalisée le 24 Avril, je viens de notifier à l'Agence Princière que ses fonctions sont suspendues à partir de ce jour.

Toutefois, les Moldo-Valaques habitant ou se trouvant dans l'Empire continueront à jouir comme par le passé de la protection des lois et des autorités Impériales au même titre que les sujets fidèles de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Les navires Moldo-Valaques resteraient également sous la protection des autorités Impériales dans l'Empire et des Consuls Ottomans à l'étranger.

Veuillez communiquer cette décision au Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes

accrédité et donner des instructions en conséquence aux Consuls placés sous votre juridiction.

No. 89.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(Telégraphic.) *Pera, May 3*, 1877, 4·45 P.M.

WITH reference to Sir Henry Elliot's despatch No. 1303 of last year, the suggestion that a cable should connect Malta with Crete and that England should thus be placed in direct telegraphic communication with Constantinople, is worthy of the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, as our telegraphic lines may at any moment be interrupted, and some of them are so already. It is, however, to be considered whether, in the event of a rising in Crete, the communication could be maintained.

No. 90.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 3*, 1877, 5·30 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 1st, Consuls at Toultcha have telegraphed that Said Pasha has informed them that full warning will be given them of his departure, and that he will arrange with them, so that time shall be given them to ensure the safety of the persons and property of foreigners.

No. 91.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 3*, 1877, 9 P.M.

FOLLOWING is official notification of blockade of Russian ports in Black Sea:—

Article 1. The Ottoman Government declares the whole of the Russian Coast of the Black Sea, comprised between Churuk Sou, on Asiatic Coast, and the Kilia, mouth of the Danube, in Turkey in Europe, to be in a state of blockade.

Art. 2. The blockade thus established will take effect from the 5th of May, and will be maintained by a sufficiently powerful Ottoman fleet.

Art. 3. A delay of three days, reckoning from the 5th May, is granted to all vessels wishing to proceed to one of the blockaded ports, and a delay of five days to those who wish to clear from the same. At the expiration of this delay any vessel endeavouring either to enter or to quit the blockaded waters will be treated as an enemy.

Art. 4. As regards vessels which, being on the voyage, are ignorant of the state of blockade, the "Ottoman fleet, on their arrival in blockaded waters, shall notify to them the blockade. If, after this special notification, the ships persist in advancing they will be considered as enemies."

No. 92.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 4*, 1877, 10·45 A.M.

IN accordance with your Lordship's instructions, Sir Arnold Kemball started for the head-quarters of the Turkish army in Asia yesterday afternoon. As all regular communication is suspended, I directed the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Antelope" to convey him to Trebizond.

No. 93.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 4, 1877, 12·30 P.M.*

IN consequence of the declaration of the blockade of the Russian ports, which no ship will be allowed to enter after the 5th instant, the steamer mentioned in your Lordship's telegram of the 2nd cannot be allowed to proceed to Odessa.

No. 94.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 4, 1877, 2·40 P.M.*

BRITISH merchants having property at Galatz are alarmed as to losses they may sustain in the event of a bombardment by Turkish men-of-war. Use your best efforts that warehouses at Galatz, in which British property is stored, may be exempted from bombardment or destruction, if possible, in case of attack on the town.

No. 95.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 4, 1877, 2·45 P.M.*

MESSRS. THEOLOGO have written to me about the danger to loss with which their property at Galatz is threatened under present circumstances.

You should use your best efforts for the preservation of British property.

No. 96.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 4, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

SIR COLLINGWOOD DICKSON is appointed additional Military Attaché to your Embassy.

No. 97.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4, 4·45 P.M.*)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Pera, May 4, 1877, 1 P.M.*

I AM informed very confidentially that four Russian ships-of-war have been reported off the eastern coast of Italy in the Adriatic, and that their object is suspected to be to raise Crete or the Christian population of Turkey in Albania and Bosnia, and to give assistance to Montenegrins.

Porte believes that it can take measures to keep Russian fleet in check, or to give it battle with every chance of success.

No. 98.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 4, 1877, 6·10 P.M.*

CAPTAIN GRENFELL, who has been appointed Naval Attaché to the Maritime Courts, is going shortly to St. Petersburgh. He will start for Berlin to-morrow.

Telegraph to me and repeat to Lord Odo Russell whether you think that under present circumstances Captain Grenfell will be allowed the usual facilities.

No. 99.

Consul Barrow to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Kertch, May 4, 1877.*

REPORT untrue. Russian steamers most attentive in piloting ships in and out. Not one accident has occurred to my knowledge, nor likely to.

No. 100.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 4, 1877.*

HAVE made necessary representation in regard to vessel detained at Ibraila. Russian Government will communicate with Russian military authorities at Ibraila. They are preparing regulations for the protection of foreign commercial interests.

No. 101.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Adrianople, May 4, 1877.*

SPECIAL Agent of Bulgarian Relief Committee arrived here last night from province of Philippopolis, and reported as follows:—

"Everywhere quiet prevails. Turks eager for the Russian war, but very well behaved towards the Bulgarians. A few Circassian raids on cattle are reported, but not more than usual. Adrianople is also very quiet, but news of English neutrality has painfully impressed the people."

No. 102.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May 4, 1877, 1·30, P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 2nd, I have no further information to confirm language of the Russian Agent respecting Russian naval movements, which may have been meant to intimidate.

Porte has telegraphed to the Viceroy regulations promulgated at Constantinople regarding Russian shipping, neutral commerce, &c., with directions that the rules for the Bosphorus and Dardanelles are to be applied to the Suez Canal.

Egyptian Government have thereupon taken following decision:—

To stop passage of Russian men-of-war through the Canal.

To permit passage of all other men-of-war, and all mercantile marine, Russian inclusive, subject to the right of search for contraband of war.

Entrance to the Canal will be guarded by torpedoes carefully placed, and passage for commerce will be buoyed.

If reprisals are made by Russia, her mercantile marine will be stopped.

Decision will be officially notified after approval at Constantinople.

Question of number of troops to be sent to Turkey still in abeyance.

No. 103.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 4.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

THE Roumanian Agent promises to communicate to me the copy of a note which he addressed to Minister for Foreign Affairs three days ago, declaring that Roumania had no intention of declaring war, or of changing her relations with the Porte.

Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from whom I received the information

reported in my telegram of yesterday, appears still to know nothing of this communication.

No. 104.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, May 4, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

INFORM Austrian Government that as soon as Her Majesty's Government learn terms of note on subject of free navigation of Danube, they will readily make a similar representation, and will be happy to join Austria in any steps for protection of neutral commerce and interests.

No. 105.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

Berlin, May 4, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs tells me that the Porte appears willing to agree to German protection of Russian interests, and that he hopes the question will now be speedily settled.

No. 106.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

St. Petersburgh, May 4, 1877, 2·15 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received a note from M. de Giers, stating that the Russian military authority granted permission to English Danube Commissioner to return to Galatz, provided he returns by land.

No. 107.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

Bucarest, le 4 *Mai*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

MONITORS Turcs tirent sur batteries près de Reni depuis matin.

No. 108.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

Galatz, May 4, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TURKISH iron-clad has been firing on batteries below Reni since morning.

No. 109.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

Vienna, May 4, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE following is the substance of the answers given to the questions put to the Government on the subject of the war:—

1. Everything possible will be done to prevent its causing European complications.

2. With reference to its effect on the state of things in the East, such influence will be used under all circumstances as the situation and the interests of the Monarchy may require. With a view to the protection of these interests, the Government will reserve, notwithstanding a declaration of neutrality, their freedom of action. Until now the

Government have been able to follow the course of events without military preparations, and they will remain stedfast to the principle of not burdening the State by a mobilization for which there is no cause, and at present they see no reason for military measures. On the other hand, the Government, being conscious that no Power has more immediate and important interests to defend in the east of Europe than Austria, are aware of the full measure of their responsibility.

No. 110.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 4.)

Bucharest, May 4, 1877, 4·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT is reported that a Roumanian force, with twenty heavy guns of position (probably Russian) has reoccupied Kalafat.

No. 111.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, May 4, 1877.

(No. 162.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram of the 3rd instant, reporting that notes will be addressed by the Austro-Hungarian Government to the Turkish and Russian Governments asking for a declaration that the free navigation of the Danube will be re-established as soon as the operations of war do not render such interruption indispensable, I have to state to your Excellency that as soon as Her Majesty's Government learn the terms of the note which is to be addressed by the Austrian Government to the Russian and Turkish Governments, they will readily make a similar representation.

They will also be happy to join Austria in taking any steps for the protection of neutral commerce and interests.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 112.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

Pera, May 5, 1877, 10·30 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 3rd instant, I have reason to believe that the question between Persian and Turkish Governments with regard to islet in the Euphrates will be satisfactorily settled.

No. 113.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

Pera, May 5, 1877, 10·40 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, conduct of German Chargé d'Affaires here, and the instructions which he states to have received, are quite at variance with assurances given at Berlin, as your Lordship will find by my despatches.

No. 114.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

Pera, May 5, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PLEASE inform Admiralty that I have requested Captain Drummond to remain here until I have heard from Kustendji whether presence of ship-of-war is absolutely necessary there. As "Antelope" is away there would be no vessel-of-war here, and there

would be probably some difficulty in obtaining permission for the "Helicon" to pass Dardanelles.

As soon as "Antelope" returns, "Rapid" will go to meet "Helicon," and then a ship can be spared for Kustendji. If Vice-Consul at Kustendji informs me that presence of a ship of war is really urgent, "Rapid" will go at once.

No. 115.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 5*, 1877, 12·30 P.M.

FOLLOWING telegram has been sent by Porte to Vali of the Danube:—

"Give all possible facilities to foreign subjects desirous of leaving Toulteha by river or otherwise. Inform immediately Consuls of measures definitively adopted for evacuation of town by foreigners."

No. 116.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5, 2·20 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, May 5*, 1877, 1 P.M.

I AM informed that a private arrangement has been made by the Comptoir d'Escompte at Paris in concert with a Berlin firm and a St. Petersburgh firm, to advance to Russian Government from 3,000,000*l.* to 5,000,000*l.* sterling, at 8 per cent.

No. 117.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 5*, 1877, 1·30 P.M.

MY private opinion is that visit of Captain Grenfell at this moment will not be well viewed here; nor do I think that usual facilities will be granted, as Russia is at war.

The feeling here is very bitter against England.

No. 118.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 5*, 1877, 3 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 49, unless there is urgent necessity to replace Mr. Barker, it would be better to avoid any Consular changes at this moment. The subject is under consideration, and no salary is at present available for Monastir.

No. 119.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 5*, 1877, 6 P.M.

REPRESENTATION has been made at St. Petersburgh respecting detention of industry, and Russian Government will communicate with their military authorities at Ibraila. Regulations are being prepared by Russian Government for the protection of foreign commercial interests.

No. 120.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 5*, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 59, Commander Drummond has been instructed to comply with your wishes as to his movements.

No. 121.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 5*, 1877, 7 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 35, Indo-European Company ask me to mention, in order to avoid misunderstanding, that their line from the Straits of Kertch to the Persian frontier is a land and not a submarine line.

No. 122.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May 5*, 1877.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, might not defence of the Suez Canal by torpedoes be very dangerous to neutral vessels, and particularly to our transports?

There are certainly no other defences available; but I think a simple prohibition would suffice, as I doubt if a Russian man-of-war would enter the Canal to be caught in a trap.

Shall I say anything upon this point?

No. 123.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 5*, 1877, 9 P.M.

I RECEIVED to-day, by post, your Lordship's despatch No. 160, and shall communicate it to Prince Gortchakow to-morrow morning.

No. 124.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, May 5*, 1877, 10·30 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, Minister of Marine has given orders that, in the event of bombardment of Galatz, British property should be spared as much as possible, but he requests that British flag should be hoisted on British premises at once. Will your Lordship telegraph to Consul? I have no means of so doing.

No. 125.

Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May 5*, 1877.

PERSIAN troops in Arabistan concentrated on the Karoon River, eight miles from Mahomerah, some of them armed with Chassepot rifles.

No. 126.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(No. 5.) *Foreign Office, May 5, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 25 of the 23rd instant reporting the circumstances of your interview with Hobart Pasha on board his vessel off Galatz, and I have to state to you that I entirely approve your conduct on that occasion, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 127.

Lord Tenterden to Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson.

Foreign Office, May 5, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 128.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 104. Political.) *Cairo, April 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 25th instant, desiring me to be careful not to join in any pressure that might be put upon the Khedive in regard to the question of his sending assistance to the Porte.

My despatch No. 102, Political, of the 22nd instant will, I hope, satisfy your Lordship that I have faithfully carried out these instructions. It was not my fault that my French colleague thought fit to express an unauthorized opinion that the views he was urging upon the Khedive were those of Her Majesty's Government. I have spoken to him upon the subject, and I hope the indiscretion may not be repeated.

I do not see much disposition here to make any great sacrifices to assist the Porte at this moment, but this apparent indifference may change as the war progresses. The line of conduct that the Khedive and the Egyptian Government have laid down for themselves is not to touch the money pledged to their European creditors, to keep all their financial engagements punctually, and not to send a single man more to Turkey than can be provided for out of any extraordinary resources that can be raised in the shape of voluntary subscriptions and loans, and the measure of such assistance will be decided by the Chamber of Delegates who have been convoked for the purpose; it cannot, therefore, be very great.

The Khedive thus expects to satisfy Europe and at the same time to do his strict duty towards his Suzerain, and there is no doubt that, if during the war, Egypt continues to pay her coupons regularly, it must enormously increase her credit abroad, and I believe the Khedive indulges a secret hope of obtaining his independence by thus acquiring the good-will of Europe, in the event of Turkey crumbling to pieces. It is quite possible, however, that if the dispatch of assistance is delayed too long, the vessels conveying the troops may be seized or stopped by a Russian cruizer.

There is no truth in the report published in the English newspapers, that the Khedive has promised to visit Constantinople next month.

His Highness has telegraphed to Constantinople for instructions as to what he shall do in the event of Russian men-of-war, coming from the Indian and Chinese Seas, demanding to pass through the Suez Canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, as he seems to expect may be the case. If, as he foresees, the Porte directs that they shall not be allowed to pass through, he expects a bombardment of the Egyptian ports in the Red Sea, but if the passage of the Canal were attempted to be forced (which I doubt), it might do injury to the Canal which might seriously affect neutral commerce.

It is reported here that the Russian fleet is returning from the Atlantic with its strength much increased, and that the ships took out a double complement of crews to man vessels purchased in America.

All sorts of rumours are rife as to the despatch of a large English fleet here, and as to our intentions to take possession of the country, but I dismiss them as idle, although the Khedive and Cherif Pasha tell me that they are supported by the authority of my French colleague, who, I fear, is prone to indiscretion of language. He has, I believe, suggested to his Government to send some French ships here.

The Russian Agent and Consul-General still remains here, and says he has as yet received no final instructions to leave; but as the Porte have given the Khedive a very strong hint, as your Lordship will see from the inclosed telegrams, that he should rid himself, as they have done, of the Russian Consuls, it appears to me that M. de Lex's position must become untenable; that if he stays he will be looked upon here in the light of a spy, and that he must take his departure before long; but his pretension to consider his position in Egypt as different from that of the Russian Consuls in the rest of the Ottoman Empire seems to me untenable, unless indeed Russia wishes to treat Egypt as independent of Turkey.

M. de Lex professes to be still hopeful that war may yet be averted by the mediation of the European Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 128.

The Grand Vizier to the Khedive.

(Télégraphique.) *Pera, le 24 Avril, 1877.*

J'AI l'honneur d'informer votre Altesse que le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie vient de rompre les relations diplomatiques avec la Sublime Porte, et son Chargé d'Affaires à Constantinople nous a déjà annoncé son départ avec le personnel de l'Ambassade et tous les Consuls Russes établis sur le territoire Ottoman. La Sublime Porte a fait tout son possible pour éviter une pareille extrémité. Mais devant l'initiative prise par la Russie, le Gouvernement Impérial s'est trouvé dans la nécessité de prescrire de son côté à l'Ambassade Ottomane à St. Pétersbourg et à tous les Consuls en Russie de retourner à Constantinople. Au moment de partir M. Nelidoff a remis à la Sublime Porte une note pour l'informer que les sujets Russes en Turquie sont placés sous la protection du Consul Allemand.

Inclosure 2 in No. 128.

The Grand Vizier to the Khedive.

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 24 Avril, 1877.*

AINSI que j'ai eu l'honneur d'en informer votre Excellence par mon télégramme de ce matin, la Russie a rompu ses relations diplomatiques avec la Sublime Porte; tous les Consuls de Russie dans l'Empire Ottoman devant quitter la Turquie, les intérêts des sujets Russes ont été, en vertu d'une entente entre les Cabinets de Berlin et de St. Pétersbourg, confiés aux Consulats d'Allemagne. Je me fais un devoir de porter ce qui précède à la connaissance de votre Altesse, et la prie de vouloir bien prendre de son côté des mesures en conséquence.

No. 129.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 107. Political.) *Cairo, April 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

A COMMUNICATION that I have just received from Chérif Pasha makes it necessary to correct a portion of my despatch No. 104 of to-day.

The Khedive and his Council of Ministers have, upon further consideration, determined not to invite any positive instructions from the Porte just yet upon the question of

the passage of Russian men-of-war through the Suez Canal, lest the execution of such orders should expose the Egyptian ports of the Red Sea to the risk of a bombardment or a blockade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 130.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 214.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 1, 1877.*

ON the receipt this morning of your Lordship's instruction of yesterday, I immediately informed Prince Gortchakow, in a note of which I annex a copy, that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had been requested to state that the Turkish Government finding themselves compelled to require the withdrawal of all Russian subjects from the Ottoman territory, they will not avail themselves of the consent of Her Majesty's Government to take Turkish subjects in Russia under their protection.

I have telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Odessa, and Her Majesty's Consul at Tiflis, to annul the telegraphic instructions of yesterday; and I have addressed a circular, of which a copy is inclosed, to Her Majesty's Consuls, withdrawing and annulling my previous circular.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 130.

Circular addressed by Lord A. Loftus to Her Majesty's Consuls in Russia.

Sir, *St. Petersburgh, May 1, 1877.*

HER Majesty's Government having been informed by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that the Turkish Government have withdrawn their request to Her Majesty's Government to undertake the protection of Turkish subjects in Russia during the war, I have to state that the instruction I forwarded to you yesterday is hereby annulled.

I have at the same time to inform you that the Queen has issued a Proclamation similar to that of August 9, 1870, in regard to the Franco-German war, declaring the neutrality of Great Britain in the war between Russia and Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 131.

Count Schouvaloff to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

M. le Comte, *Londres, le $\frac{21 \text{ Avril}}{3 \text{ Mai}}$, 1877.*

AYANT l'intention de me rendre à St Pétersbourg en vertu d'un congé que j'ai sollicité, je m'empresse de vous en informer.

Conformément à l'usage établi, c'est le Conseiller de l'Ambassade, M. Bartholomei, qui me remplacera provisoirement ici avec le titre de Chargé d'Affaires.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) SCHOUVALOFF.

No. 132.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, May 5, 1877.*

A BOAT was sent from Ismail on 1st of May to Toultscha to inform Colonel Siborne he could land at Ismail. To-day news received boat has returned without answer,

communication with Turkey being interrupted. I have telegraphed, begging Ambassador at Vienna to inform Constantinople. Austrian Commissioner has telegraphed through Vienna to Sulina.

No. 133.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 6, 1877, 11·30 A.M.*

TURKISH Minister of Marine has given orders that in case of bombardment of Galatz, British property should be spared, as far as possible, but he requests that British flag should be hoisted on British premises at once.

No. 133 A.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 6, 1877, 12·30 P.M.*

I COMMUNICATED this morning your Lordship's despatch No. 160 to Prince Gortchakow. On my finishing its perusal His Highness said that, not wishing to commence a polemical discussion, he should refrain, unless ordered otherwise by the Emperor, from replying to it.

No. 133 B.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 6, 1877, 3 P.M.*

I COMMUNICATED yesterday to Baron Orczy the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 4th instant, expressing the readiness of Her Majesty's Government to join Austria in representing to belligerents with regard to maintenance of future freedom of Danube, and Count Andrassy has informed me to-day that he will give immediate instructions for the communication to your Lordship of the notes which he had addressed to Russian and Turkish Governments on the subject.

No. 134.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, May 6, 1877, 3·15 P.M.*

I HAVE communicated to-day to Count Andrassy your Lordship's answer to the Russian Circular. He gave evident signs of satisfaction whilst reading it, and having finished it said, if the Circular was to receive an answer no other could have been given to it. I left a copy of despatch with him to be translated for communication to the Emperor.

No. 135.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 6, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

I LEARN from the Minister of Foreign Affairs that Austro-Hungarian declaration of neutrality is about to be issued at Vienna and Pesth by the Presidents of the two Governments, which will be maintained as long as war does not affect interests of monarchy.

No. 136.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

Galatz, May 6, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
RUSSIAN Consul writes:—
"Industry" not detained. Her passage down river is prevented in her own interest. She would run risk of almost inevitable loss; below Reni passage is open.

No. 137.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Constantinople, May 6, 1877, 11 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of 2nd instant, it appears that Shefket Pasha was not to have a command at Bagdad. Minister of War has sent to ask me whether I would consent to his being employed in Armenia, where there is a great want of competent officers. I am informed that Shefket Pasha is a very active officer, and may be of great use, but I cannot agree to Minister of War's proposal without your Lordship's sanction. Please reply immediately.

No. 138.

Vice-Consul Stokes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

Sulina, May 6, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
OTTOMAN authorities refuse to allow me to proceed to my post at Tultcha to protect British subjects and interests. What am I to do? Instruct me. Ottoman Governor told me that if I went, the steamer under British flag would be seized or sunk.

No. 139.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(No. 8.)
Foreign Office, May 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to state to you that I learn from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that orders have been issued by the Porte to spare, as far as possible, all British property, in the event of a bombardment of Galatz taking place.

The Turkish Minister of Marine requests that, in order to facilitate the execution of these orders, British subjects should forthwith hoist the British flag over the premises owned by them; and I have to instruct you to make this known at once to the persons interested.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 140.

The Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff.

Foreign Office, May 6, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 6th instant, in which you inform me that you are about to proceed to Russia on a short leave of absence.

As your Excellency will then doubtless have an opportunity of personally conferring with your Government, I take this occasion of placing before them some considerations of importance to the future good understanding between Great Britain and Russia.

Her Majesty's Government do not propose again to enter on the question of the justice or necessity of the present war; they have already expressed their views with regard to it, and further discussion would be unavailing. They have accepted the obligations which a state of war imposed upon them, and have lost no time in issuing a Proclamation of Neutrality. They, from the first, warned the Porte that it must not look to them for assistance, and they are determined to carry impartially into effect the policy thus announced, so long as Turkish interests alone are involved.

At the same time they think it right that there should be no misunderstanding as to their position and intentions. Should the war now in progress unfortunately spread, interests may be imperilled which they are equally bound and determined to defend, and it is desirable that they should make it clear, so far as at the outset of the war can be done, what the most prominent of those interests are.

Foremost among them is the necessity of keeping open, uninjured and uninterrupted, the communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal. An attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches would be regarded by them as a menace to India, and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world. On both these grounds any such step—which they hope and fully believe there is no intention on the part of either belligerent to take—would be inconsistent with the maintenance by them of an attitude of passive neutrality.

The mercantile and financial interests of European nations are also so largely involved in Egypt that an attack on that country, or its occupation, even temporary, for purposes of war, could scarcely be regarded with unconcern by the neutral Powers, certainly not by England.

The vast importance of Constantinople, whether in a military, a political, or a commercial point of view, is too well understood to require explanation. It is, therefore, scarcely necessary to point out that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to witness with indifference the passing into other hands than those of its present possessors, of a capital holding so peculiar and commanding a position.

The existing arrangements made under European sanction which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles appear to them wise and salutary, and there would be, in their judgment, serious objections to their alteration in any material particular.

Her Majesty's Government have thought it right thus frankly to indicate their views. The course of events might show that there were still other interests, as, for instance, on the Persian Gulf, which it would be their duty to protect; but they do not doubt that they will have sufficiently pointed out to your Excellency the limits within which they hope that the war may be confined, or at all events those within which they themselves would be prepared, so far as present circumstances allow of an opinion being formed, to maintain a policy of abstention and neutrality.

They feel confident that the Emperor of Russia will appreciate their desire to make their policy understood at the outset of the war, and thus to respond to the assurances given by His Imperial Majesty at Livadia, and published at your Excellency's request, when he pledged his word of honour that he had no intention of acquiring Constantinople, and that, if necessity should oblige him to occupy a portion of Bulgaria, it would only be provisionally, and until the peace and safety of the Christian population were secured.

Her Majesty's Government cannot better show their confidence in these declarations of His Imperial Majesty than by requesting your Excellency to be so good as to convey to the Emperor and the Russian Government the frank explanations of British policy which I have had the honour of thus offering to you.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 141.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 385.)
Vienna, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE seen Count Andrassy since I forwarded a telegram this afternoon relative to the Russian Circular, and I learned from his Excellency that he had informed Count Beust by telegraph that inasmuch as an answer to the Circular has not been asked for, a simple acknowledgment of its receipt would be sufficient.

I inquired, however, whether he had taken into consideration the possibility of the Russian Government endeavouring to interpret an acknowledgment of its receipt as a tacit admission of the validity of the grounds on which they have declared war with Turkey.

He stated, in reply, that he did not think this probable, but it might, nevertheless, be

better to do nothing; and I have, consequently, been authorized by him to inform your Lordship that he will leave the Circular unanswered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 142.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 387. Confidential.)
Vienna, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Turkish Ambassador has informed me that he has been told by Count Andrassy that as long as the Porte abstains from occupying Servian territory, Russia will not send troops into the Principality, and that the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople had consequently been instructed to ask for a declaration that Servian neutrality will be strictly respected.

His Excellency appears to have stated at the same time that he felt confident that the Servian Government did not intend to take part in the war, and that the Porte need be under no apprehension of their doing so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 143.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 390.)
Vienna, April 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive to-day your Lordship's telegram, informing me that Mr. Layard had reported that 800 horses purchased by the Turkish Government in Austria-Hungary had been stopped at the frontier.

The Porte, however, has no reason to complain on this subject, as it ought to have known that, with a view to the possible requirements of the Government, the export of horses from this country was prohibited some time ago, a fact so generally known that the recent fairs have not been attended, as usual, by foreign purchasers.

The Turkish Ambassador may perhaps, however, be able to show that the prohibition was not published until after the purchases for the Porte had been effected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 144.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 393.)
Vienna, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Ministry for Foreign Affairs has received to-day information from Constantinople that the Porte has declared that it has no longer any reason to send troops into Servia, as it appears that Russia does not intend to do so.

Both Governments were informed, I understand, that war being brought near the frontiers of Austria-Hungary would be seriously objected to by the Government of the Emperor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 145.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 395.)
Vienna, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I UNDERSTAND that the Austro-Hungarian Agent in Egypt has sent similar information to his Government as that received by your Lordship from Mr. Vivian, as to

the French and Russian Agents having warned the Khedive against affording assistance to the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 146.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 397. Confidential.)
Vienna, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

A GENTLEMAN, who has exceptional means of obtaining information, and whose communications to me I have generally found to be correct, is confident that the Austro-Hungarian Government will maintain an absolute neutrality during the present war, as long as the operations of the Russian army are limited to the ostensible objects for which they have been undertaken, and the interests of Austria-Hungary do not appear to be compromised by them.

My informant considers the people not only in Hungary, but also in Austria, to be strongly anti-Russian, but as they are, at the same time, extremely desirous for the restoration of peace, he believes that a Russian victory would give general satisfaction, from an impression that a military success would induce the Emperor Alexander to offer acceptable terms of peace to the Porte.

He also believes the same sentiments to be general among the commercial and industrial classes of Germany, where, however, hostility to Russia is not only neutralized by an earnest desire for a speedy termination of the war, which, it is hoped, a Russian victory would effect, but also by an apprehension that the Emperor William's affection for his nephew might lead him to afford assistance to Russia if she met with a defeat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 147.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 399.)
Vienna, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

IT appears, from information which I received to-day at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that, according to the report received here of the representations said to have been made by the French Consul to the Khedive, as to the risks which he might incur by affording military assistance to the Porte, they had merely reference to the injury which might be caused to the interests of the Canal by the complications which such assistance might lead to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 148.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 401.)
Vienna, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

IN conformity with instructions which he had received from Constantinople, an assurance was given to-day by the Turkish Ambassador to the Austro-Hungarian Government, that if Russia engages to respect the neutrality of Servia, Turkish troops will not enter into the Principality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 149.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 403.) *Vienna, May 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, acquainting me with the assurance received by Colonel Mansfield as to the Roumanian Government not intending to declare war to Turkey or to refuse payment of the tribute, I find that no communication of a similar nature has been made to the Government of Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 150.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 404.) *Vienna, May 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of the 26th ultimo reporting that Count Andrassy had authorized me to inform your Lordship that he would give no answer to the Russian Circular, I think it right to explain that I must have misunderstood his Excellency when I represented him to have stated that he had telegraphed to Count Beust that an acknowledgment of the receipt of the Circular would suffice, as I have since learnt that he decided, after my inquiries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs referred to in another telegram of the same day, to inform Count Beust that he would leave the Circular unanswered.

My conversation with his Excellency was limited to an exchange of a few words while he was about to get into his carriage, which will account for my mistake.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 151.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 406. Confidential.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

FROM the reports received here on the present state of the Danube, it is believed by persons who are well acquainted with the character of the river that there is no probability of the Russians being able to lay a bridge over it before the beginning or the middle of June, and that the Russian army is not likely to have crossed it in force, from the mere physical difficulties of the passage, until the end of that month.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 152.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 407. Confidential.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

ABOUT ten days ago Prince Metchersky, an officer in the household of the Emperor of Russia, arrived at Vienna, where he only remained two days before returning to Kischenew.

His visit has, therefore, given rise to a report, which is contradicted at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that he was the bearer of an autograph letter to the Emperor from the Emperor Alexander. One of my colleagues, however, pretends to know that there is no doubt that, whatever brought it, a letter has been received by the Emperor conveying assurances from the Emperor Alexander that no operations will be undertaken by the Russian army in Turkey of a nature to compromise the interests of Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 153.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 412.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN answer to an inquiry on the subject of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I am informed that notes are about to be addressed by Count Andrassy to the Governments of Russia and Turkey, asking for a declaration that, as soon as the operations of the war now existing do not render the interruption of the navigation of the Danube indispensable, the free navigation of the river will be re-established on its present footing.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 154.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 414.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

AFTER the statement made to me by Baron Orczy, which I reported to your Lordship in my telegram of yesterday, that no confirmation had been received here of the assurances given to Colonel Mansfield by the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Government of Roumania had no intention of declaring war to the Porte, or of changing its relations with Turkey, I was surprised to learn to-day from the Agent of the Principality here that he addressed a note three days ago to Count Andrassy making a similar declaration as to the policy of his Government, without referring, however, to the payment of the tribute.

M. Balatcheano has promised to give me a copy of his note, and I shall take an early opportunity of forwarding it to your Lordship

After my conversation with him, I again spoke on the subject to Baron Orczy, and, from what he said, I have no doubt that the note was received directly by Count Andrassy, and that he has omitted to communicate it to his Excellency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 155.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 415.) *Vienna, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to Colonel Mansfield's telegram of yesterday on the attitude of Austria-Hungary on the subject of the suspension by Russia of the navigation of the Danube, I have inquired of Baron Orczy whether any steps have been taken in the matter.

His Excellency stated in reply that Count Andrassy will address immediately notes to the Russian and Turkish Governments, in which, while reminding them that the free navigation of the Danube has been established by Treaties between the Powers of Europe, and admitting that there may, nevertheless, be grounds for Austria-Hungary, as a neutral State, submitting to its temporary suspension, as a consequence of the military operations rendered necessary by the existing state of war between Turkey and Russia, he will ask them for a declaration that the free navigation of the river will be again re-established on its former footing, as soon as its interruption ceases to be indispensable with a view to the operations of the war.

In answer to a further inquiry on my part, Baron Orczy said the belligerents would also be called upon to respect the works and establishments of the European Commission. He did not, however, express an opinion as to who is to pay the interest on the loan contracted by the Commission when it ceased to draw any revenue from the river. But he evidently felt that the stoppage of the revenue of the Commission, and likewise the intention of Russia to lay down mines, of which some might possibly be left in the river, were highly objectionable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 156.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 7.)

(No. 19. Confidential.) *Buda-Pest, April 30, 1877.*

Sir,

I AM informed that the views of the military, and in a certain degree pro-Slav party, are unchanged as to the desirability of an annexation down to Salonica of the mixed Turkish provinces, and that General Mollinery and other Slav Generals advocate energetically a policy of this nature, whilst the Archduke Albrecht and other high personages favour it.

The Hungarians are much concerned at the journey of the Archdukes William and Albert to the military frontier and at the movement of the Austrian regiments into Hungarian quarters; and they anxiously fear lest there be an understanding with Russia. And amongst the articles in the journals against Russia are some which vigourously repudiate as impossible any acquiescence by Count Andrassy in a policy so antagonistic to the interests of Hungary. It is however believed by many that on the victory of the Russians over the Turks such a policy will be inaugurated under the guise of occupation, and that Count Andrassy and M. Tisza may reluctantly acquiesce.

But such a course would certainly deprive Count Andrassy of the support of the Hungarian nation and accelerate the downfall of M. Tisza, whilst a discontented Hungary would be at least a serious dead weight upon a pro-Slav policy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 157.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 7.)

(No. 20.) *Buda-Pest, May 1, 1877.*

Sir,

THERE has been much excitement here as to organizing sympathetic demonstrations in honour of the Turkish Envoy who was charged with the present from the Sultan to the Pesth University Library of the "Corvina" books, which had been saved by the Turks from their destruction of the library of King Matthew in Buda during the Turkish wars of the middle ages.

But great disappointment followed the frustration of these intentions by the books being delivered over in Vienna and forwarded here.

To-day a vote of thanks to the Sultan was unanimously passed amid enthusiastic cheering in the House of Deputies, in the presence of the Sheiks and Softas now on a visit to Pesth.

The Croats did not attend, having previously decided to absent themselves on the grounds that it was a purely Hungarian question.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 158.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 7.)

(No. 21.) *Buda-Pest, May 2, 1877.*

Sir,

A GENERAL welcome and a large hospitality have at this capital been given to the deputation of Sheiks and Softas who have arrived to return the visit of the Hungarian students to Constantinople.

An enthusiastic reception awaited them at several Hungarian towns, and at the procession on Sunday and the banquets since the demonstrations of sympathy must have been very gratifying to the Mahommedan guests.

The Hungarians consider that these marks of popular feeling, in which all classes join, prove that the Hungarian nation will not tolerate any anti-Turkish policy.

The delay in the arrival of the Turks, and the belief, confirmed by the "Egyertele's" a day or two ago, that it was owing to representations of Count Andrassy at Constantinople, seem to have given a greater zest to these anti-Russian demonstrations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 159.

Mr. Corbett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 33.) *Berne, May 1, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt last night, at 11 P.M., of your Lordship's telegram, dated yesterday, 6·45 P.M., informing me that Her Majesty the Queen had on that day proclaimed neutrality in the war between Russia and Turkey.

In obedience to your Lordship's instructions, I have conveyed this intelligence to Her Majesty's Consul at Geneva.

I have also announced to the Federal Government that a Proclamation of Neutrality has been issued by Her Majesty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWIN CORBETT.

No. 160.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 176. Confidential.) *Berlin, May 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me confidentially that he has spoken to Türkhan Bey, the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, on the subject of the proposed protectorate of Russian subjects and interests by the German Government, and has explained to him that while the German Government do not contest the right of the Turkish Government to expel Russian subjects from Turkey, they regret the refusal of the Turkish Government to admit the protection of Russian interests and subjects by a friendly Power, because they consider the refusal as unusual, and calculated to estrange Germany, who is otherwise anxious to keep on friendly terms with Turkey, as the appointment of Prince Reuss sufficiently proves.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 161.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 178.) *Berlin, May 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 176 of the 3rd instant, I now learn from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that Safvet Pasha appears willing to agree to the protection of Russian subjects and interests by the German Government, and that he has, therefore, every hope that the question will be satisfactorily and speedily settled at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 162.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 181. Most Confidential.) *Berlin, May 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to Sir Andrew Buchanan's despatch No. 397, Confidential, of the 30th ultimo, alluding to an impression that the Emperor William's affection for his nephew might lead him to afford assistance to Russia if she met with defeat, I am in a position to confirm this impression on the best authority.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

On the other hand, if Russia shall be victorious the German Emperor will wish to lend the weight of his moral support to whatever peace conditions she may impose on Turkey.

Mr. MacDonell tells me that he has learnt, on what may be considered good authority, that those conditions will probably be—

1. Bulgarian autonomy.
2. Free navigation of Dardanelles and Bosphorus.
3. War indemnity.
4. Reduction of Turkish naval forces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 163.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 353.)
My Lord, *Paris, May 5, 1877.*

I HAVE learnt, upon what I believe to be good authority, that the Comptoir d'Escompte at Paris, in conjunction with a Berlin firm and a St. Petersburgh firm, agreed yesterday privately to make an advance of from 3,000,000*l.* to 5,000,000*l.* sterling to the Russian Government.

The terms on which this loan is to be made are stated to me to be nearly the following:—

The interest to be 8 per cent.

Russian 5 per cent. Stock to be deposited as a security; but the contractors not to be at liberty to dispose of it unless the interest on the present loan is left unpaid.

The contractors to have the preference in contracting for any new Russian Loan which may be brought out, and to have the option of changing the amount at present advanced into stock in any such new loan at the rate of 73*l.* sterling for a 5 per cent. bond of 100*l.* sterling.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 164.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 354.)
My Lord, *Paris, May 5, 1877.*

I HAD this morning the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch No. 266 of the day before yesterday, and I have this afternoon put into the Duc Decazes' hand a copy of your despatch to Lord Augustus Loftus No. 160 of the 1st instant, containing the answer of Her Majesty's Government to Prince Gortchakow's circular despatch of the 15th ultimo, announcing that orders had been given to the Russian armies to cross the frontiers of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 165.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 7.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 5 Mai, 1877.*

JE vous prie d'exprimer à Lord Derby la profonde reconnaissance de la Sublime Porte envers le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique pour l'accueil favorable qu'il a bien voulu faire à notre demande tendante à obtenir que ceux de nos sujets qui résident en Russie soient placés sous la protection de l'Ambassade et des Consulats de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Le bénéfice de cet acte de bienveillance du Gouvernement Britannique semblait devoir être suspendu par suite de l'intention de la Sublime Porte d'expulser les sujets Russes des Etats du Sultan. Mais, depuis lors, le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman ayant

consenti au séjour des sujets Russes en Turquie sous la protection de l'Ambassade d'Allemagne, vous voudrez bien prier Lord Derby de prendre telles mesures et de faire près la Cour de Russie telles démarches qu'il jugera à propos à l'effet d'assurer à nos sujets en Russie la protection que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine veut bien leur accorder, et nous donner immédiatement avis du résultat de vos démarches.

No. 166.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 15. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, April 18, 1877.*

THE present state of the administration of justice in Crete, and particularly in Canea, is such as to induce me to offer some remarks on the subject.

It may be within your Lordship's recollection that the General Assembly at its last sitting refused to elect the members of the Administrative Council and of the Court of Appeal in the place of those whose term of office had expired, and for many months the sittings of the latter Court were suspended. Moukhtar Pasha, on his arrival here in January, induced the out-going member to resume his seat, but he has again resigned, and the Tribunal is reduced to nullity.

The Court of First Instance, the election of the Judges composing which does not depend on the General Assembly, continues indeed to exercise its functions, but if it rendered itself obnoxious in the past for corruption and negligence, its action has now become almost paralyzed. The accumulation of cases awaiting decision is every month on the increase, and the Executive authority seems to be powerless to arrest the evil. The prisons are full of criminals either awaiting trial or on whom, after trial, no sentence has been passed, from the inability of the Court to come to a decision. The evil is the greatest in the case of those accused of murder and other crimes of violence.

The procedure in these instances, which I will briefly describe, is so tedious, and the final result so uncertain, as to reduce the law to a mockery. For example, a person accused of murder is first interrogated by two Juges d'Instruction—one Mussulman and one Christian—who forward the evidence taken down by them after a thorough examination of the witnesses to the Court of First Instance. Here the evidence is fully gone into, and Christian and Mussulman witnesses are again called to give their testimony. After much delay the President and Judges give a resumé of their opinions on the case, but, being a criminal matter, do not pass a sentence, which is reserved for the Court of Appeal. The latter, after studying the evidence and maturely considering the opinion submitted to them by the inferior Tribunal, pass sentence on the accused, condemning him, let us suppose, to a term of imprisonment.

According to the Organic Law, the sentence, accompanied by all the evidence committed to writing, should next be sent to the High Court of Justice at Constantinople for confirmation. But in 1870 or 1871, an Iradé emanating from the Sultan directed that every sentence passed by the Appellate Court should be first submitted to the Cadi for his "fetva," or legal opinion. But, inasmuch as Christian evidence is inadmissible by the Sheria, if the man has been condemned on the strength of such testimony, the Cadi refuses to approve the judgment, which is thus invalidated; but if the evidence possesses the unimpeachable quality of Moslem testimony, he sanctions the sentence by his "fetva." Now, the Cadi happening at the present time to be also President of the Court of Appeal, the edifying spectacle is offered of the same functionary first passing a sentence on a prisoner based on the evidence of Christian witnesses, and afterwards refusing to sanction it on the plea of Christian witnesses not being by Mussulman law worthy of credit.

It is but justice to the High Court at Constantinople to state, however, that the "fetva" of the Mollah is often overruled, and that those eminent lawyers record their sanction of a judgment, or withhold it, without much reference to his opinion. Tedious delays are frequently caused by this reference to Constantinople, although it is rendered indispensable by the notorious ignorance of the Judges of the local Tribunals. The latter now and then are guilty indeed of keeping back a judgment altogether in cases where they are anxious to screen a culprit from the penalty of his crime, and after many months, or maybe a year's delay, when the matter is forgotten, the prisoner is released. The President and most influential Judges being Mussulmans, it is naturally only Mussulman criminals for whom this favour is reserved.

A Mussulman is now in the local prison against whom the clearest proof was brought

of his having committed a most cold-blooded murder. Infinite pains were taken to save him from condemnation. After some months the same witnesses, who were Mussulmans, were brought up to give their testimony a second time, when they retracted their former evidence, saying they had been mistaken, and this has been held as a sufficient plea for not condemning the accused. It never seemed to occur to the Court to punish the witnesses for perjury.

It is estimated that some eighty or ninety murders have been committed in this island since the suppression of the last insurrection, but not a single case has been followed by capital punishment, and only in ten or twelve instances have lighter penalties been inflicted.

The Courts of First Instance and of Appeal are each formed of four Judges, two of either creed, and of a President. As the decision of suits rests mainly with the President, who has two votes, and who hitherto has always been a Mussulman, the late Governor-General, Réouf Pasha, aware of the evil resulting from this unequal distribution of power, and anxious to give a proof of his impartiality, attempted to substitute a Christian for a Moslem as President of the Court of First Instance, but the proposal created so much indignation among the Mahommedans that his Excellency was obliged to abandon the attempt.

A most extraordinary instance of perversion of justice in a case of civil procedure has just occurred here, on the high sanction of an order from the Grand Vizier addressed to the Vali. His Highness enjoins the latter to instruct the Courts that debts, even though contracted in the past, are henceforth payable in paper money, the interest thereon being likewise reduced from twelve to nine per cent. Seeing that the debtors received their money in coin, with the usual stipulation that twelve per cent. should be charged after the term of payment had expired, it seems an unwarrantable stretch of authority thus arbitrarily to alter the contract. Such seems to be the view taken by the Sheikh-ul-Islam, who has just written a sort of protest to the Governor-General against the carrying out of the new rule in the case of the Bank of the Orphans, an institution over which his nominee, the Cadi, presides. He states that he was absent from the Grand Council when this important measure was discussed and passed, and that he must dissent from its application. Debtors are eager to settle their accounts on a basis so satisfactory to themselves, but creditors demur to a settlement on such terms. Several claims have already been liquidated in accordance with the new principle, and on the creditors objecting the Court has ruled that on the debtors depositing into Court the amounts of their debts in paper money, a claim cannot be further prosecuted. The Government has probably a double object in view in decreeing this law, partly to endeavour to give the newly issued Caimé a forced currency, and partly to curry favour with the peasantry, who owe considerable sums to the local merchants, who sarcastically speak of the measure as one of the new reforms.

There is yet another Tribunal in Canea, that of commerce. A meeting was convoked the other day by the Vali Pasha of the principal merchants belonging to both communities, for the purpose of electing the four Judges for the present year. Before the meeting came together it was agreed by all parties that they would decline to elect new Judges because the sentences passed by the Court were never executed. The Pasha, however made so many fair promises of amendment that they finally consented to choose the four new members, but nobody believes there will be any real improvement on the old system.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 167.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 16. Political.) *Canea, Crete, April 23, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 12, marked Confidential, I had the honour to state to your Lordship that in the event of war breaking our between Russia and Turkey the Cretan Christians were resolved to seize the opportunity for gaining their liberty.

I have since had the means of learning, through a third but thoroughly trustworthy party, the opinion held on this subject by the most prominent Chief in the island, one who is looked up to as a Nestor among his fellow Chiefs. Interrogated as to whether he

would counsel his people to take up arms as soon as war was declared, he replied, "We would wait to see the result of the first battle."

After that his interlocutor added, "You would begin hostilities?"—"We would wait to see the result of a second battle," was the answer. "And after that you would call your people to arms?"—"We would first see the disposition of the Powers," was the Chief's rejoinder. His questioner then intimated that he supposed they would be willing to leave the decision of their future lot in the hands of the Powers. "You may depend upon one thing," was the prompt reply, "that we shall not miss this opportunity of striking for liberty and ridding ourselves of the Turks."

Without pretending to be certain that the above dialogue foreshadows the course of events likely to take place in Crete during the next few months, I think it not improbable, from the faith I put in both speakers, who are intimate friends of each other, that it indicates the policy which the Chiefs intend to pursue, and in this belief I am strengthened by the statements made to the same person by another Chief only second in influence to the preceding.

While confirming in all essential respects what had been laid down by his comrade as the tactics to be followed in the coming crisis, this latter spoke more fully of the Cretan Committee in Athens, with which he was in correspondence. He stated that there was now but one Committee, which included many Epirots and Thessalians. His own countrymen, he continued, who are prepared to subordinate their individual action in this important crisis to the will of the Chiefs, would not stir till the Epirots and Thessalians had taken up arms, inasmuch as the latter, from their propinquity to the Greek frontier, are in a better position than themselves for receiving support from Greece.

Now, although the Cretan Chiefs who are thus planning an insurrection possess an acknowledged sway over their followers, they themselves confess that in times of excitement like the present their control over the more hot-headed spirits is not absolute, and that their impatience may upset the calculations of the cooler and more experienced heads, especially should any acts of violence be committed by the Mussulmans on their brethren in the towns.

I also ventured in the despatch above referred to to state my belief that the majority of the people would prefer to see their lot cast in with England rather than with Greece. While I adhere to that opinion, I think it proper to add that during the last two or three weeks there has been a perceptible diminution of this feeling of preference for an English connection.

The negotiations for peace carried on during this period, in which the Governments of Great Britain and Russia played a principal part, have induced the Cretans to believe that Her Majesty's Government gives the weight of its influence to the Porte, and as they regard this question exclusively from their own point of view, they jump to the conclusion that while Russia is striving to liberate the Eastern Christians, Her Majesty's Government is willing to see the old state of things continue.

Advantage has naturally been taken to increase the dislike thus created by Russian and Greek partizans, who eye with displeasure the prevalence of ideas favourable to an union of this island with England; and though I believe the feeling may be only temporary, it has certainly weakened for the moment the sympathy felt for Great Britain.

The Cretans are also perfectly aware that I have uniformly discountenanced the notion that Her Majesty's Government would connive at any attempt at bringing about a change of masters in the island, so that if, in spite of discouragements of all kinds, the idea still continues, its survival is the best proof how deep it had once struck its roots in the minds of the islanders.

The importation of gunpowder, which I stated also as being carried on, shows no signs of diminution, and the authorities are now quite aware of the fact, though powerless to prevent it. The trade is so lucrative that I know of a Turkish Boy in Selino who is engaged in it, the temptation of gain getting the better of his patriotic feelings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 168.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 58. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, April 26, 1877.*

THE retrograde movement of the Roumanian forces, which I had the honour to communicate by telegraph, is a step of considerable moment to this country.

On two occasions I impressed upon M. Kogalniceano my conviction that the occupation of Kalafat must result in a disaster of the first magnitude, and that to exhibit armed bodies on the Danube might be an invitation to attack on the part of the Turkish irregular cavalry.

I do not know whether my expression of opinion had any weight, but the conviction of the imprudence of their policy seems to have gradually grown upon the Cabinet, more especially as the feeling in the country is decidedly opposed to a policy of action and adventure.

Politically, to have offered resistance to, or invited attack from, the forces of the Porte, would have put this country in an entirely false position with regard to the Porte, the Guaranteeing Powers, and the Treaties, and it is a cause of satisfaction that the Government have retraced their steps before it was too late.

The passage of the frontier by the Russian army was quite unexpected; the Minister for Foreign Affairs told me late on Saturday evening, the 21st instant, that he did not expect that the passage of the Pruth would take place before the 29th, and one of the most curious features was the circumstance that Russian troops were marching during eight hours over Roumanian territory, from the Bessarabian frontier, before this Government received the smallest information of the incident.

The feeling of humiliation on the part of Prince Charles and the Government is extremely keen; they cannot recover from their vexation that the proclamation of the Russian Commander-in-chief is addressed to the Roumanian population, and that this Government is as much ignored as if Prince Charles were the mere Pasha of a "vilayet."

M. Bratiano has for some months drifted towards a Russian policy, and now the mortification is all the greater that the entrance of the army has been effected without a Convention or notice of any description.

In this crisis Russia has proved herself a better friend to the United Principalities than the Prince or the Ministers. Roumania might now plead that the Russian armies entered the country without authorization; and although, of course, it cannot be ignored that the Prince and the Ministry would gladly have come to an arrangement with Russia, still, technically speaking, nothing has been formally signed, and any subsequent Convention might be regarded as arising out of the force of circumstances, and merely as a measure to secure for the country the best terms compatible with a foreign occupation.

In all this the Russian action has been extremely adroit; the mobilization of this army was, if anything, rather discouraged by Baron Stuart; and I am aware that it has been a cause of vexation that the Baron would enter into no sort of engagements or declaration, or even indicate what would be agreeable to his Government.

The Russian Government during the last few days communicated directly with the railway authorities, asking for information, and pointing out what might be the possible requirements; and the only step which could be considered as an encouragement to the Government of Prince Charles was the liquidation of an old debt, mentioned in my despatch No. 51 of the 23rd instant.

I have not the least belief that the Prince or M. Bratiano are cured of their Russian sympathies, and it would not surprise me to hear that the Prince endeavours to accompany the Russian Army into Bulgaria, in the command of a Roumanian corps d'armée; it might also be that the Grand Duke Nicholas may consider that, although the Roumanian army is contemptible as a foe and worthless as an ally, that it is more politic to take the incumbrance with him than to leave an organized armed force in his rear, a force which, were Austria-Hungary to mobilize, would have affinities of race and language with the Bucovina and Transylvanian regiments.

The Prince, in his attempt at a policy of action and adventure, is criticised with much severity; the country is only desirous of inaction and non-participation in the coming conflict; the upper and middle classes are alarmed, while the discontent of the peasants at being taken away for the mobilization from their spring agriculture is as bitterly expressed as can be expected from so docile a race as the inhabitants of these principalities.

Prince Charles has never taken root in this country, and the current of his unpopularity is now at its highest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 169.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 6, 1877, 11 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Erzeroum dated to-day:—

"Kars completely surrounded. Circassian villages in Sohanlee occupied. Provisions paid well by Russians. Generals have published strict orders to maintain discipline. Villagers directed to arrest Cossacks attempting to pillage. This action has produced very favourable impression in the country. As Russian army advances, villagers, Mahommedans and Christians, go to meet it with pleasure. Giule and Childir occupied by Ardahan column, which is advancing with the evident intention of turning Soganlee position by way of Penee. It seems evident main body remains in Kars plain to allow wings to close round Soganlee by way of Pence and Cupricui. If manœuvre successful, Turkish army must surrender. People arriving from Kars report demoralization there and among troops at Soganlee. Here arrival of the enemy is regarded by Armenians as certain in about three weeks. They may have secret information. Circassian and irregular cavalry are arriving."

No. 170.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 6, 1877, 11·30 P.M.*

BLUHM PASHA leaves to-morrow morning to commence immediately the fortification of the lines from Buyuk Tchekmedjé to Dürkos for the defence of Constantinople. He is also charged to make a plan for the defence of Adrianople.

No. 171.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 62, we cannot interfere with the Turkish Government in their choice of officers. The effect on public opinion of the appointment of Shefket Pasha to an important command would be very bad, as his conduct is generally considered here to have deserved the severest punishment.

No. 172.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7, 1·20 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 7, 1877, 10·45 A.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, Persian Minister gives me most solemn assurance that Persia has no intention of concentrating troops on the frontiers of Arabistan, and neither he nor Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs have heard anything of the presence of Persian troops near Mohammerah.

No. 173.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877, 5·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram sending notification of blockade of Russian ports in Black Sea, does Turkish Government intend Kertch to be the port where the notice begins to count, or does it give time for vessels to proceed to the several ports in the Sea of Azof and return to Kertch, counting the five days allowed for departure at the port where they have been discharging?

Secondly. Does the notification apply to vessels which had reached their port of discharge on the Sea of Azof, and are being reloaded before it was issued?

No. 174.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877, 5·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

SIR COLLINGWOOD DICKSON leaves for Constantinople on Thursday. Have you all the maps and plans that your require? if not he could bring them.

No. 175.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877, 5·50 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

"HELICON" sailed from Malta for Constantinople direct at 10 o'clock on Saturday night.

No. 176.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877, 6·40 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

BRITISH merchants are strongly representing that the days of grace allowed for neutral vessels in notification of blockade are insufficient.

Use your best efforts to obtain a prolongation sufficient to meet cases of vessels now on their way to Russian ports.

The United States allowed fifteen days, and longer periods have been allowed by other nations.

No. 177.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.[a]

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

INQUIRE if the Government to which you are accredited will join in the following representation which I sent to Mr. Layard this afternoon:—

British merchants are strongly representing that the days of grace allowed for neutral vessels in notification of blockade are insufficient.

Use your best efforts to obtain a prolongation sufficient to meet cases of vessels now on their way to Russian ports.

The United States allowed fifteen days, and longer periods have been allowed by other nations.

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[a] Similar telegrams were sent to Berlin, Vienna, and Rome.

No. 178.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

Galatz, May 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of the 6th, I have informed British subjects that they should hoist British flag. There are batteries or troops quartered in Galatz itself. Commercial interests are almost exclusively foreign; even houses used as public buildings are chiefly owned by foreigners.

No. 179.

Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

Bagdad, May 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

SHAHZADAH arrived at Mahomerah with a force and two guns. Movement considered suspicious, as there is no occasion for the concentration of troops there.

No. 180.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

Bosna-Serai, May 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

GOVERNOR-GENERAL informs me that Ismet Pasha telegraphs that he has driven all the insurgents in the north-west across the frontier into Austria. I should be glad to hear this confirmed.

Freeman not yet arrived.

No. 181.

Consul Carruthers to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

Taganrog, May 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

AUSTRIAN Consul officially informed from Vienna blockade Black Sea ports commenced 5th instant; further term of three days allowed for departure. About ten British steamers here loading. Cannot possibly pass Kertch within said term. Your Lordship's intercession with the Porte requested for prolongation of term on account of the important interests involved.

No. 182.

The Danube European Commission to the Earl of Derby.

Galatz, le 7 Mai, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

LES Délégués Austro-Hongrois se trouvant seul au siége de la Commission ouverture de la session printemps reste ajournée jusque avis ultérieur, les Délégués de France et d'Angleterre sont empêché de venir par interdiction de la navigation. Délégué Allemand par affaires, Délégués Ottoman, Russe, Italien, n'ont pas donné nouvelles. Pour la Commission Européenne.

No. 183.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7.)

Constantinople, May 7, 1877, 7·15 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE question of amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians having been submitted to Sultan, His Majesty has expressed readiness to grant it, and it will be announced immediately. Sultan has also expressed wish that Shefket Pasha, who is now here, recalled from his command on the Danube, shall receive no appointment whatever.

With regard to Turkish criminals condemned for Bulgarian outrages, Safvet Pasha has proposed, subject to the Grand Vizier's approval, that they shall be sent to undergo their sentences to Benghazi, in Africa, where they will be under the supervision of a British Vice-Consul. I am afraid that it will be utterly impossible to obtain execution of sentence of death pronounced upon two of them in the present temper of the nation.

(Very Confidential.)—I would venture to suggest to your Lordship to communicate above to Parliament, except as to mentioning Sultan's name in connection with Shefket Pasha.

No. 184.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 71.)

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram of the 6th instant, in which you state that the Minister of War has inquired of you whether you would consent to the employment of Chefket Pasha in Armenia, where competent officers are very much required, and that you had replied that you could not agree to such a proposal without the sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

I have to inform you, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere with the Turkish Government in their choice of officers.

You will, however, not fail to point out that Chefket Pasha's conduct is considered here to have deserved the severest punishment, and that his appointment to an important command would have a very bad effect on public opinion in this country.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 185.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 74.)

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to state to you that I have received several strong representations from British merchants to the effect that the days of grace allowed for neutral vessels in the Turkish notification of blockade are insufficient.

I have to instruct you to use your best efforts with the Porte to obtain a prolongation to meet the cases of those vessels which are now on their way to Russian ports.

I should add that during the late war in America the United States allowed fifteen days' grace, and that even longer periods have been allowed by other nations.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 186.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 179. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 158, Most Confidential, of the 28th ultimo, respecting what had passed at an interview which you have had with General Menabrea in regard to the views entertained by the leading members of the Italian Government with reference to the present and future policy of Italy in the war which has now commenced between Russia and Turkey; and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to General Menabrea upon the occasion in question.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 187.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 180 Confidential.)

Foreign Office, May 7, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 159, marked Very Confidential, of the 28th ultimo, recounting a conversation which your Excellency had had with M. Melegari, and in which were discussed the terms of the reply which should be returned by the Italian Government to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 19th of April; and I have to inform your Excellency that the language which you held to M. Melegari upon this subject is approved of by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 188.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 7, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 7, 1877, 10 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of this morning, Minister of War informs me that he has telegraphed to the Governor of Bagdad to ascertain whether there is any truth as to Persians concentrating near Mohammerah. Governor has replied that rumours to that effect had reached him through secret agents, but the Minister of War attaches no great importance to them.

Following just received from Colonel Nixon, dated 7th instant:—

"Shahzade arrived at Mohammerah with a force and two guns. Movement is considered suspicious, as there is no reason for concentration of troops there."

No. 189.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 32. Political.)

Salonica, April 10, 1877.

My Lord,

CONSEQUENT upon instructions received by telegram from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at the Porte, to investigate and report on disturbances or outrages in his district, Mr. Consul Blunt sent his clerk, Mr. Henry Longworth, to Ipek, who did not return in time for Mr. Blunt to send in his report.

I have the honour now, my Lord, to supply this unavoidable omission, and to inclose herewith, his reports, dated respectively the 12th and the 15th of April, 1877.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 189.

Mr. H. Longworth to Consul Blunt.

Salonica, April 15, 1877.

Sir,

IN compliance with your request, I have the honour to submit to your consideration some observations I made in a journey to Uscup, Mitrovitza, Novi Bazaar, and Sienitza, during the last month of February.

1. Uscup, the first large town I visited on the Salonica-Mitrovitza line of railroad, has a population of 30,000, a small minority of whom are Christians. The town seemed tranquil and prosperous, exhibiting no traces of recent troubles.

It is important for its large tanneries and extensive trade in furs and cereal.

2. Mitrovitza, now the terminus of the railway, is a small town of 4,000 inhabitants, and contained when I was there an entrenched camp with 6,400 men under the command of Abdulla Pasha. It is a strategic position of great importance, forming as it does the real basis of all military operations in Bosnia.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

In this neighbourhood I was informed that a series of most revolting cruelties had been perpetrated a few months previously by the Bashi-Bazouks and Mahommedan villagers. I endeavoured to ascertain the truth of the alleged excesses, but my inquiry was attended with many difficulties, some ascribed the origin of these disorders to Mahommedan fanaticism, whilst others attached the blame to the action of the Rayahs in arming themselves for revolt, and in burning Mussulman villages; whatever may be the cause, it is too evident that the suffering inflicted was cruel and terrible. The following list contains a few only of the many crimes that are said to have been lately perpetrated within a radius of twenty miles from Mitrovitza. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement, but simply relate what is generally believed by those in the town who are known to have the best means of acquiring information on the subject.

List of Crimes.

Mitrovitza, February 28, 1877.

	Period.	Locality.	Victims.	Remarks.
1	Five months ago ..	Granichani . ..	6 women and 4 girls .. Viz.— 1. Stania Vouchina. 2. Slata Aventiva. 3. Vouchilka Simina. 4. Santia Zwethova. 5. Ardengia Ayananova. 6. Stamenka Damava. 1. Miriana Sazearova. 2. Vilischkova. 3. Sova. 4. Tova Miloutina.	Abused and 4 killed.
2	Two months ago ..	Arabojeba . ..	Kiersta and wife ..	Man robbed and killed; woman abused.
3	" " ..	Dobligin	Ellia's daughter . ..	Seized for conversion, and abused on refusal.
4	" " ..	Schotanova . ..	Stoiko and wife . ..	Man killed and woman abused.
5	One month ago ...	Copanik	A girl	Forcible abduction.

In not one of these crimes have the authors been punished, though since the arrival in February of Riphat Pasha, the new Vali of Pristina, the district has assumed a more peaceful aspect, and the Christians are enjoying a greater amount of security.

3. The appearance of the country between Mitrovitza and Novi-Bazaar, though well wooded and watered, remains in a very primitive condition, uncared for alike by Government and people.

It presents a marked contrast to the country adjoining the railway, where improved cultivation and comfortable huts bespeak the good effects of the line in promoting the industry and civilization of this country.

4. Novi-Bazaar, formerly the capital of the Servian Krals, has a population of about 12,000. It has a natural fortification in the fine range of surrounding hills, occupied at the time of my visit by a force of 3,200 men under Ibrahim Pasha. Should the country assume a peaceful condition, this town is likely to become a commercial entrepôt of some importance, owing to the railway having opened a more direct communication between the Servian frontier and the port of Salonica.

Many instances of Mahommedan depredation are recounted by the Christians of Novi-Bazaar, cases of robberies, rapes, abductions, and murders; but what has already been stated will suffice to prove the laxity of justice in the interior, and may suggest that the ill-feeling in Christians is probably engendered by the inertness of their rulers more than by religious animosity. Especially so in these parts, where the inhabitants are a people peculiarly tenacious of their civil rights, and where insurrections have principally been due to the pertinacity of the authorities in gratifying their lust and rapacity. Should present state of affairs continue much longer, I have been assured by several persons that a great mass of the rayahs will be driven to the extremity of either revolting or professing Mahommedanism in the endeavour to obtain some protection for life, honour, and property.

During my journey, however, I myself could perceive no signs to indicate a move-

ment, either open or concealed, towards emancipation or conversion, nor any evidence of a menacing aspect in the discontent of the Christians.

5. The country through which I traversed on the way from Novi-Bazaar to Sienitza manifested a most deserted appearance, which is mainly ascribed to the majority of the Christians having been forced to forsake their homes and emigrate into Servia, leaving as the only signs of life a few scanty hamlets thinly peopled.

The number of villages burnt along this part of the frontier does not seem to be accurately known.

Reports differ on the subject, from a maximum of twenty-five to a minimum of ten. But it is generally believed that not more than a dozen villages have been destroyed by the Servian and Turkish forces on the southern side of that portion of the frontier. Abdulla Pasha, however, when I was at Mitrovitza, assured me, with some considerable pride, that, during a successful raid in Servia by way of Sutschenitza, he conquered twenty miles of territory and burnt thirty-five villages.

6. Sienitza is a small town of 2,000 inhabitants, situated on an elevated plain, and surrounded by a range of high hills. From the importance of its geographical position it has become a central military station, the encampment of 10,000 men, and the quarters of the Commander-in-chief Mehmet Ali Pasha.

The inhabitants of this neighbourhood have suffered many hardships—hardships that must have equally arisen from the retaliatory acts of the Servians as from the barbarities of the Bashi-Bazouks and the rapacities of the peasantry.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY G. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 189.

Mr. H. Longworth to Consul Blunt.

Salonica, April 12, 1877.

Sir,

IN pursuance of your instructions of the 20th ultimo, I visited Ipek on the 1st instant to make inquiries as to some alleged murders reported in the "Glas Cznogora," a translation of which was furnished by Miss Irby to Canon Liddon, and inserted by him in the "Daily News" of the 2nd March last.

I have now the honour to report that the information I obtained was derived from the more prominent and trustworthy men of the Greek, Latin, and Mahommedan communities; and that the results of my inquiries have led me to refute the general assertions of the article, and to expose as a simple fabrication the report of the massacre alleged to have taken place on the Greek Christmas-day.

"This morning," the statement in question states, "before daybreak, we went to the sacred Patriarchate to hear the Divine service, but the Turks had filled the hill Kestenova, which rises immediately above the church, with their ruffians, and when the pious people were assembled in the churchyard, these Mussulmans fired upon us across the hedge. A second and a third time they fired. Thus on the day of the birth of Christ, the blood of innocent men, women, and children was shed about and around the church. The happiest day which our Church celebrates we have spent in the greatest grief and sorrow. Instead of hymns of joy, have resounded funeral lamentations and wailings of women and children. We have buried to-day 29 men, 16 women, and 8 little children, killed by Turkish guns. This is our peace on earth."

I visited the Patriarchate situated within the suburbs of Ipek, but the place showed no traces to verify the above statement, nor did the people there possess any knowledge of such an occurrence.

In this visit to the Patriarchate, and in one previously to the Daivich Monastery, I made particular inquiries as to the state of insecurity and intolerance encountered by the Christians in their religious observances. But neither the priests of the church nor the monks of the convent referred to this massacre, although they were ready enough to enlarge upon their grievances and exaggerate the excesses of the Turks.

That "the Proto was going into the Church of the Patriarchate to perform the evening service, when the Turks lay in wait for him at the doors of the court, wounded him frightfully, and killed his companions," is not exactly true.

The fact is that the Proto Staifan, with Staifan Vesto and Spaso Yanko, were shot at on the 21st of December last near the village Ruhat, eight miles from Ipek, by a band of men under a certain Malisor of Djahova. The Proto and Spaso Yanko were only wounded, whilst their companion Staifan Vesto was killed, the murderers escaping into the mountain fastnesses.

The following extract from the article is substantially correct; but as yet it has not been ascertained by whom the murder has been committed:—

"The Knez Marco, with his companions, left the Court, but was summoned again at 8 P.M. The zaptiehs were laying wait for him and killed him."

There are several versions in circulation with respect to this murder. Some assert it to have been committed by the zaptiehs or police, some by Mahommedans, whilst others attribute it to the Christians themselves. The local authorities and Rayahs of Ipek, however, in general, believe it to be the act of the "Youz-bashi," or Captain of Police, lately dismissed from the service. This is probably the truth, although Essaf Pasha, the Mutessarif of Prisrend (who in January was instructed to proceed to Ipek and investigate the condition of the Christians) suggested to me, in my subsequent visit to that town, the probability of the murder having been committed by Christians, in order to excite an ill-feeling against the Mahommedans. But one cannot give credence to such an explanation, when all that is known is that Marko Cojabachi was found dead on the 26th of December, within a short distance of the Police Court, that he was a man much respected by Turks and Christians alike, and that his assassination is deeply lamented by all classes of the inhabitants.

The Christians of Ipek, especially those of the Greek ritual, assured me, in several private interviews, that owing to Mahometan fanaticism, they undergo many dangers as the daily incidents of life. But on careful inquiry I found that the origin of this insecurity should greatly be attributed to fueds and domestic quarrels.

The "Faidas," or vendetta, in fact, of the Arnaout Society is still an institution among the people of Upper Albania, where it is the principal source of disorders in every tribe and creed.

To give an idea of the present state of the country, I shall here enumerate the Slavonian Rayahs killed and wounded during the past three months of the year. The list was given to me by the Christians, but it can be considered authentic, as I had it checked by the Kaimakam and the local Medjlish. It has been impossible to distinguish which of these cases have arisen from vendetta, which from brigandage, and which from motives of fanaticism:—

	Date.	Locality.	Victim.	Remarks.
	1877			
1	Jan. 20	Bania	Tomo Covachevich ..	Killed.
2	,, 20	Verich	Stoyan Philipoff ..	,,
3	,, 23	Sferkoy Dagange ..	Sfeteo Milich	,,
4	,, 25	Socavich	Savo Youvan	,,
5	,, 26	Dragolefcha	Petro Palkovich	,,
6	,, 30	Kerainoy	Stanoyeh Ristich ..	Wounded.
7	,, —	Vochnich	Yokaim	Killed.
8	,, —	Tuchess	Youvan Knez	,,
9	,, —	In town	Nicho Angello	Wounded.
10	Feb. 6	Kerainey	Christo Colalovich ..	,,
11	,, —	,, ...	Sfeteo	,,
12	March 1	Vetomerecha	Maliko	Killed.
13	,, 8	Suburb of town ..	Theodor Mikitch ..	,,
14	,, 14	In town	Nahor Siredon	Wounded.
15	,, 15	Moistir	Nicola Steffo	,,

Some improvement in the administration of justice has been attained in this district since the arrival two months ago of Ebrahim Haki Effendi from Constantinople—a man highly esteemed by the people for his energy and integrity of character.

The jurisdiction of his Kaimakamlik extends over a radius of 30 miles, and over a population consisting of 3,462 Christian and 6,581 Mahometan villagers; exclusive of the town containing 1,821 houses and 4,346 inhabitants, 1,252 of which profess the Christian faith.

The houses in these parts are generally built of stone, and loopholed like small forts.

The country is very fertile and well cultivated. The people are naturally brave and of robust health. They are generous and hospitable in disposition, but if excited they become ferocious, and if reduced to want, their habits are predatory. Both the Mahometans and the Christians are warlike, but whilst the former is actuated by patriotism as well as fanaticism, the latter is only influenced by sectarian animosity. So much so that Monsignor the Archbishop of Prisrend (a man of large experience and extensive knowledge) assured me that in consequence of this rivalry of creeds, the Christians of Upper Albania, notwithstanding their love of independence, will never voluntarily emancipate themselves from Turkish rule, and that this sectarian ill-feeling stands in the way of

an union between the Greek Christians of Montenegro and the Roman Catholics of Albania.

In concluding this report, I must not omit to mention the civility and kind reception I everywhere met with from Christians as well as Turks; and the obligation I am under to the Turkish authorities in general, and Ibrahim Effendi in particular, for the assistance they afforded me in procuring reliable information upon the condition of the country.

Inclosing herewith a statement of expenses incurred on the journey, amounting to 11*l.* 16*s.* 8½*d.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY G. LONGWORTH.

No. 190.

Vice-Consul Billotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 8. Political.) *Trebizond, April* 20, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4, Political, of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, translation of a Petition dated 22nd March (3rd April) from the inhabitants of the district of Kelkit, embodying all the claims of the Christians in the villages of Ghelin, Pertek, Hozberek, Kelahbam, and four other villages.

This petition attributes to the incapacity of the Governor of Gumushané the disorders of which they have to suffer, and amongst which they mention:—

1. That three Mussulmans, whose names are known, have ravished the wife of a Drinos, a Christian living at Termouni.

2. That at the instigation of their Mussulman neighbours, certain Redifs seated the priest of the village of Ghelin Pertek on a donkey, in the wrong direction, compelling him to hold the tail as bridle, and perpetrated many other improper and daring acts.

3. That at the village of Kelahboor they defiled the church, pulled down the bell, and committed many other abuses there, as well as in the villages of Hozberek and Seri.

4. That about forty Musselmans of the village of Denlek assaulted Papa Sava (the priest) and thrashed him severely.

Finally, the petitioners state that whenever Christians go from one village to another they are robbed and illtreated by the Mussulmans; that the house of the priest of Seri was also plundered; that they cannot obtain redress from the Governor of Gumushané; that their condition is such that they are compelled to lay their claims before the Governor-General of Trebizond, in the hope to obtain security for the future.

This petition contains, with some variations, the complaints embodied in the letter of the Greek Archbishop of Erzeroom, with the addition of the outrage on Papa Sava, and the plunder of the house of the priest of Seri, which, it must be presumed, took place after the date of the letter. In this petition also, with the exception of the affair of Termouni, no special mention is made of women having been ravished; but there is a new feature introduced, that is, that the resident Mussulmans are the instigators of the disorders committed by the Redifs. It is remarkable, however, that, so far as one can judge by names, this petition is also signed by four Musulmans.

The result of the inquest which is carried on at this moment, and which must be soon completed, by the Colonel of Police of this Province, the Mayor sent from Erzeroom, and a Christian of note from Gumushané, will, no doubt, elucidate matters.

I expect to hear confidentially from the Christian Commissioner whether the investigation has been conducted conscientiously, and if I ascertain that it has not, I intend to proceed myself on the spot, and find out the truth; unless Her Majesty's Embassy thinks that in the present complicated state of affairs it is better that I should not absent myself from my residence for about three or four weeks, the time required for the journey and the investigations in the villages mentioned above.

But I can in the meantime say that it is highly desirable that the Mutessarif of Gumushané, Hussein Rushti, should be superseded by a fitter person. I spoke of him without mentioning his name, in my Confidential report of the 29th February, 1876.

Referring to a Kaimakam and a Mutessarif who had obtained places by favouritism, I said: "One of them, at all events, is a notorious bad character, but has had the chance to be the owner of the house in which Mahmoud Pasha dwelt when he was exiled in this town." This notorious bad character is the present Mutessarif of Gumushané.

I cannot say as yet whether there are exaggerations in the other complaints of the

Christians, in the district of Kelkit, but I consider that there is none in their accusation against the Mutessarif.

He was formerly Kaïmakam of Sinanah, and dismissed in consequence of his having been convicted of gross abuses. The Governor-General of this province himself deplores his being compelled to suffer that a similar individual should serve under him, but it does not depend on him to cancel his appointment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 190.

Petition to the Governor-General of the Province of Trebizond.

(Translation.)
Your Excellency,

WE, Undersigned, Christian inhabitants of the Greek villages in the cantons of Yagnoor-Déré and Kelkit, in the district of Gumushané, a dependency of the province of Trebizond, beg to submit respectfully to your Excellency that, while formerly we were enjoying quiet and tranquillity, we are since a year, in consequence of the unfitness of the Mutessarif of Gumushané, worried and ill-treated by the neighbouring Mussulman population, a few instances of which we beg leave to mention.

1. In the village of Termouni three Mussulmans, whose names are known, broke down the door of the house of a certain Durios and dishonoured his wife.

2. At the instigation of the Mussulman inhabitants of the village of Ghelin-Pertek, Bashi-Bazouks seated the priest on a donkey in the wrong direction, giving him the tail to hold as bridle, thus paraded him in the streets of the village, and committed besides many other improper and daring acts.

3. They filled the church of Kelukbour with filth, covered the walls with dirt, pulled down the bell, and perpetrated many other abuses in this village as well as in those of Kelukboor and Seri.

4. About forty Mussulmans of the village of Deulek, having formed into a band, insulted and thrashed severely Papa Sava.

Finally, the Mussulmans are always on the look out, and whenever Christians proceed from one village to another, after beating them, they deprive them of their effects and money; things have reached to the point that we have not the least tranquillity nor security. The house of the priest of Seri was also forcibly entered and plundered.

The above facts have been submitted repeatedly to the Mutessarif of Gumushané, who pays no attention to our complaints, and takes no measures to prevent the evil. Under these circumstances we beg that your Excellency will kindly adopt such measures as you may deem convenient to prevent our continuing to be so contemptuously ill-treated as we are at present.

March 22
April 3, 1877.

(Follow signatures.)

No. 191.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 319. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 21, 1877.*

I LEFT Brindisi in Her Majesty's yacht "Osborne" on the morning of the 17th. Owing to bad weather I did not arrive here before yesterday afternoon.

The Sultan sent his first Dragoman, Munis Bey, to meet me at the Dardanelles. Mr. Jocelyn had asked the Grand Vizier to see me as soon as possible, and as it appeared to me very urgent that I should have an interview with His Highness without delay, I called upon him last night.

His Highness informed me that he had received the Sultan's commands that afternoon to express to me the great satisfaction with which he had learnt that Her Majesty had selected me for her Special Ambassador during the absence of Sir Henry Elliot, and His Imperial Majesty's earnest hope and conviction that my mission would promote the interests of his country and of England. The Grand Vizier was good enough to assure me of the pleasure he experienced in welcoming me to Constantinople.

I told his Highness that my mission was essentially one of peace; that it was the ardent desire of Her Majesty's Government and of the English people that hostilities should be avoided; and that if the Turkish Government could contribute to this result it would be entitled to the gratitude of the civilized world. I would do the utmost, I said, to assist in this great work, and I counted especially upon his help and co-operation. We should both be promoting the highest interests of our respective countries, if we could by any means prevent the war which seemed to be impending.

His Highness answered that no one desired peace more than himself, and he was ready, in order to maintain it, to make every sacrifice consistent with the dignity of the Empire and with its integrity and independence. Beyond this neither he nor any Ottoman Minister could go. Turkey adhered to the Treaty of Paris; it was an amulet which she wore round her neck; it was the guarantee of her integrity and independence, of her very existence. It was not Turkey, he declared, who wanted war, but Russia,—Russia was at this moment doing her very utmost to promote events which would render peace impossible. The European provinces of Turkey, and Servia, Roumania, and Greece were undermined by her intrigues. She had secret agents in every direction, who at her bidding could at any given moment bring about occurrences which would afford her an excuse to make war and to persuade Europe that she was justified in doing so.

If Russia sincerely desired peace she could have it at once. Turkey was eager for it and ready to disarm, if she could only obtain some kind of security against Russian aggression. Without such security she could not disband her troops and place herself at the mercy of her enemy.

I asked his Highness whether he had anything to suggest, which, in his opinion, might stave off the danger of war. He answered that, had Turkey money—only 5,000,000 sterling—she might prolong negotiations, and time gained was always in favour of peace. But she must fight, and at once, because it was utterly impossible for her to maintain a great army without money. The Mussulman populations, he declared, were eager for war. They felt humiliated and insulted by the proceedings of Russia. They well knew the risk of a struggle with that powerful Empire, but they were prepared to run this risk and to perish in arms rather than yield with dishonour. Nothing could be stronger than his Highness' language in this sense. It was that of despair. At the same time, he repeatedly assured me that he was ardently in favour of peace. "Do you not think," he exclaimed, "that I would do my utmost to preserve the lives of the tens of thousands of inoffensive, innocent Mussulmans, which will be sacrificed in a war with Russia, and to enable them to return to their families and their fields. It could only be a profound conviction that the honour and independence of my country are at stake which could make me hesitate."

I remarked that, unfortunately, Turkey, by her answer to the Protocol, had placed herself in the wrong in public opinion. That answer, whatever may have been the intention of the Turkish Government, was looked upon as a provocation and a challenge which Russia could scarcely pass over, and it afforded her an opportunity of justifying to Europe her conduct in going to war.

His Highness defended the answer, but did not attempt to deny that it had been devised to bring matters to a crisis, and to compel Russia to define clearly her intentions. But, he added, up to the present time Russia has not expressed to the Porte officially any opinion upon it; and the Embassy had not been withdrawn.

I asked his Highness whether the refusal on the part of the Turkish Government to send an Ambassador to St. Petersburgh was final and absolute.

He answered that it was. He was ready to send an Ambassador to Russia in the usual way, diplomatic relations not being suspended, but he would not consent to submit the whole Eastern question to a discussion between a Turkish Ambassador and the Russian Government at St. Petersburgh. A Special Embassy was not necessary to arrange mutual disarmament. If the Russian Government really wished for peace, they had only to give the order for disarmament, and the Turkish Government would at once do the same.

I again pressed his Highness to tell me whether any way remained for a last effort in the interest of peace, and I asked him whether he had considered the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris, which rendered it obligatory upon each and all of the signatory Powers, before having recourse to force, to enable the other Contracting Powers to mediate in order to prevent that extremity.

He answered that he had not forgotten the Article to which I referred, and he was inclined to think that it applied especially to the present case, but he was not quite certain as to the manner in which it was intended to operate. He was not unwilling to accept

the mediation of the Powers, but could he bind himself to accept a decision which might compromise the dignity of the Empire and its integrity and independence?

I told his Highness that I had no instructions to suggest to him an application to the Signatory Powers for this mediation, but I felt persuaded that any step which might afford even a remote hope of preventing war would be favourably viewed by Her Majesty's Government. I used all the arguments that I could command to persuade his Highness that in accepting such a mediation, under the reserve that the integrity and independence of Turkey as guaranteed by Treaty should not be a subject of discussion, he could in no way compromise the dignity of the Porte; and I cited to him as examples the cases in which Great Britain had submitted to arbitration interests and questions of no less importance than those now involved, and had accepted without hesitation the decisions against her. I urged that it was of the greatest importance that Turkey should endeavour to set herself right in the eyes of Europe, and that she would not find a better way of doing so than by making every effort and sacrifice for the preservation of peace. I suggested, at the same time, that if the Powers appealed to accepted the task of mediating, it might furnish the Sultan a good opportunity of issuing a Firman, or Decree, for disarmament, which would, I am convinced, have a good effect upon public opinion.

His Highness appeared struck with what I had said to him. He observed that he had not before considered the question from the point of view in which I had placed it, and that he would lose no time in consulting his colleagues on the subject.

I thought the opportunity a favourable one for calling his Highness's attention to the state of public opinion in England with regard to Turkey. I earnestly warned him not to entertain any illusions on the subject. That opinion, I said, had not changed, and I could only repeat what had been told him by Her Majesty's Ambassador with reference to it on previous occasions.

A conviction still unhappily prevailed that the Turkish Government had not punished, and did not intend to punish, the authors of the outrages upon the Christian populations in Bulgaria; but that it was disposed, on the contrary, to screen and protect them. This conviction had caused, if possible, even greater indignation against Turkey than the outrages themselves. If those who had been guilty of them had been promptly and signally punished, the impression that the Turkish authorities were responsible for them might have been removed. His Highness entered into a long explanation to prove that the accounts of those outrages were immensely exaggerated; that they had been brought about by Russian and Panslavist agents, and that the Bulgarians themselves had committed outrages equally great, and had contemplated the commission of others still greater. I replied that it was of little use to argue this matter anew; that the fact remained that Bulgarians had been put to death for their share in the events that had unhappily occurred, while no Mussulman had hitherto been similarly punished.

His Highness promised to take my remarks into serious consideration.

I then spoke to His Highness of the ill effect that had been produced in England and elsewhere by the repudiation by the Turkish Government of their debts, and of the great importance of coming to an honourable understanding with their creditors. I did not, I said, believe it possible for Turkey in her present state to pay the interest upon those debts, but she might take measures to convince her creditors that she would be prepared to fulfil her engagements as soon as her financial conditions permitted her to do so, and at the same time place before them frankly and honestly the state of her finances.

His Highness replied that the unfortunate decrees of Mahmoud Pasha, which had been the cause of the mischief, and to which I had alluded, had been revoked, and in a few days the Budget, which would enable the world to judge of the financial state of the Empire, would be placed before the Chambers.

I replied that I thought a more direct and confidential communication with the representatives of the foreign creditors would still be desirable.

His Highness said that he would speak on the subject with the Minister of Finance, who was very desirous of obtaining English advice and help in putting the finances of the country into order.

In a general conversation which ensued upon the present state of affairs, his Highness observed that during the last few days he had received more favourable news from Austria. The Austrian Government seemed now really disposed to prevent insurrectionary agents, Garibaldian and others, from passing into Bosnia, and had arrested a number of such persons, and sent them out of the country. He complained of the conduct of the Roumanian Government, which, he said, whilst pretending to remain neutral, and professing to perform its duties to the Porte, was giving all the assistance in its power to Russia.

Early this morning I called on Safvet Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs; our interview lasted for two hours. I found that the Grand Vizier had already seen his Excellency and had reported to him what had passed between us last night. I urged upon him, using the same arguments that I had used to the Grand Vizier, the vital importance of making a last effort without loss of time to prevent war, at however great a sacrifice, and of adopting measures to satisfy public opinion in England with reference to the Bulgarian outrages, and to the intention of the Porte to respect its engagements with its creditors.

His Excellency entered very fully into the question of an appeal to the mediation of the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris.

I was met by the usual argument as to the sacrifice of the dignity and independence of Turkey.

His Excellency was not sure whether the Turkish Government could, consistently with its dignity, be the first to make this appeal; whether Russia ought not to take the first step, or whether the two Powers, according to the terms of the Article, ought not to ask simultaneously for mediation.

I could not but observe to his Excellency that it was shocking that the lives of tens of thousands of those whom the Grand Vizier had termed "innocent and inoffensive Mussulmans" should be sacrificed to such susceptibilities; and I earnestly begged him to remember that a great Empire, in doing that which was right, just, and humane, could not be accused of sacrificing its dignity.

After a prolonged discussion, his Excellency said that he was not unfavourable to an appeal to the Powers for their mediation under the reserves that questions affecting the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire, as guaranteed by Treaty, should not be open to discussion. His Excellency promised to communicate at once on the subject with his colleagues.

With reference to the punishment of those guilty of the outrages in Bulgaria, his Excellency appealed to me to say whether it was possible now for the Turkish Government to execute the two (Achmet Agha and Bektash Metto) who had been condemned to death; they would be looked upon as martyrs by the Mussulmans of Bulgaria, who were convinced that through the energy these men had displayed they had been saved from the wholesale massacre which revolutionary agents had prepared for the whole Mahommedan population. If they were put to death, either serious troubles would ensue, or, in the event of another rising of the Christians through foreign intrigue, the action of the Mahommedans would be paralyzed. Their punishment would be commuted to fifteen years, or to some other term, of "travaux forcés;" others who were implicated would have to suffer various terms of imprisonment.

I replied that the Turkish Government had experienced no difficulty in carrying out the sentences of death upon Bulgarian Christians, and I could not believe that they had not the power of doing the same with regard to Mussulmans.

His Excellency assured me that very shortly all the Bulgarians, even those under condemnation to death, and whose guilt the British Ambassador had admitted, should be amnestied; but his Excellency did not appear inclined to yield in respect to the punishment of Achmet Agha and Bektash Metto, although I repeatedly and urgently represented to his Excellency that until the Turkish Government had performed this act of justice, the English people would never be persuaded that the authors of the Bulgarian outrages were not shielded and protected by the Porte.

As regards an arrangement with the foreign creditors of Turkey, his Excellency seemed disposed to take my advice, and it was agreed that we should discuss the subject on a future occasion.

I had the honour of informing your Lordship by telegraph of the result of my interviews with the Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 192.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 332.) *Constantinople, April 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAD the honour of being received in solemn audience yesterday by the Sultan to deliver to His Imperial Majesty the letter of the Queen, accrediting me as her Special Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary *ad interim* to the Sublime Porte. I was accompanied by the Members of Her Majesty's Embassy, by Mr. Sandison, Mr. Fawcett

(Her Majesty's Consul-General), the Commanders of the "Rapid" and "Cockatrice," Mr. Consul Blunt, and others. A state carriage was sent for me, and four other carriages for my suite.

The Sultan received me at "Yeldiz," a small summer palace on a hill overlooking the Bosphorus.

In placing in the hands of His Imperial Majesty the Queen's letter, I informed him that it was my agreeable duty to assure him of the sincere esteem and regard of Her Majesty, and to express to him her earnest wishes for his uninterrupted health and happiness, and for the prosperity and long continuance of his reign. I added that Her Majesty had confided to me an important and arduous mission, and that in order to discharge it to the satisfaction of Her Majesty, and in the interest of my country and that of Turkey, I relied with confidence upon His Imperial Majesty's support and favour. The friendly feelings with which I was animated towards His Imperial Majesty and his people were, I expressed my hope, not unknown to him. In this His Imperial Majesty would find a pledge of my sincere desire to promote in every way in my power the true welfare of his Empire.

His Imperial Majesty replied that the selection made by the Queen of me for her Ambassador had given him much satisfaction, as it afforded him a proof of the kindly sentiments of Her Majesty and her Government towards himself and his people. He expressed an earnest hope that the intimate relations which had so long existed between the two countries might continue, and his intention and desire to contribute in any way in his power to maintain them.

His Imperial Majesty requested me to convey to the Queen, on his behalf, the assurance of his gratitude to Her Majesty for the friendly sentiments towards him contained in her letter, and his warmest wishes for the health and happiness of Her Majesty and her family.

After my audience with the Sultan I proceeded with my suite to the Porte to pay the usual official visit to the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which was immediately afterwards returned to me at the Embassy by his Highness and his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 193.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 333. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1877.*

AFTER my public audience by the Sultan, as described in my despatch No. 332 of this date, His Imperial Majesty was good enough to receive me in private. The only person present was Safvet Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. His Imperial Majesty, after he had asked me to be seated, commenced the conversation by saying some obliging things with regard to myself personally. He observed that he was fully aware of the interest that I had always shown in the Turkish Empire, and that he considered it a special proof of the sympathy and kindly feeling of the Queen and her Government towards him and his people that I had been selected as her Ambassador. I replied to His Imperial Majesty that I gladly availed myself of this opportunity to assure him that I had the true interests of himself and of his country at heart, and that such being the case, I trusted that His Imperial Majesty would permit me to speak to him, on all occasions, openly and frankly as a loyal friend. I then communicated to His Imperial Majesty the kind and gracious messages with which the Queen had charged me for him at Osborne. I told him that Her Majesty had not forgotten that he had been her guest in England, and that she felt true sympathy for him, and the liveliest concern in his happiness and welfare. His Imperial Majesty was very much touched by what I had been commanded by the Queen to say to him, and begged me, in very warm terms, to express to Her Majesty his deep gratitude, and to assure her of the great importance that he attached to her friendship. His Imperial Majesty then begged me to speak frankly to him. He looked upon me as his friend, he said, on whose advice he was prepared to place the fullest reliance.

After thanking His Imperial Majesty for this expression of his confidence, I said that I had arrived at his capital at a very critical and important moment. Unfortunately, as he was aware, events which I was persuaded he truly deplored, had led to an estrange-

ment between our two countries, and to a change in that friendly feeling towards Turkey which had formerly so happily prevailed in England. It was, however, useless to go back to the past. It was now essential to think of the future. I would submit frankly to His Imperial Majesty my opinion as to the course to be pursued. All that I felt authorized to do to assist His Imperial Majesty was to offer him the advice that every possible exertion and sacrifice should be made for the prevention of war and the maintenance of peace; in order that if, unfortunately, war was inevitable, Turkey should not be held responsible for it, and the impression which had been conveyed to Europe that she intentionally provoked it should be removed.

The Sultan replied nearly in these words: "I am sure the Queen of England will feel for me. I came to the Throne very young, and without experience, at a time of unexampled difficulty, and under circumstances with which the world is acquainted. I cannot be held responsible for the state in which I found my Empire. I am willing, ready, and most desirous to do all in my power to ameliorate its condition. I know that war can only make that condition worse. It is, therefore, to my interest and to that of my people, whether Mussulmans or non-Mussulmans, that there should be peace. Moreover, all my convictions and sentiments are in favour of peace. I would not intentionally crush an ant under my foot; how then could I be capable of wishing to sacrifice the life of a single man? But a great Power is determined to force me into war. Whilst professing to be peaceful, it has driven my country to resent such attacks upon its dignity and independence as no people who had any self-respect could submit to. Russia declares that she wishes for peace; she has only to give a proof of her desire for it by disarming one battalion, and I will at once disarm ten; and I beg you to give this assurance to Her Majesty's Government."

I answered that I had ventured to submit to His Imperial Majesty's Ministers my views as to the only course to be pursued which might offer a remote hope, a very remote hope I admitted, of maintaining peace, and, at the same time, of setting Turkey right in the eyes of Europe. I trusted that they had been placed before His Imperial Majesty. I was afraid it was now too late to expect that the step to which I referred would be successful; but even if unsuccessful a last attempt by Turkey to maintain peace—an offer on her part to make every possible sacrifice consistent with her dignity and independence in so great a cause—would place her in a favourable position before the civilized world. I entreated His Imperial Majesty not to permit mere questions of dignity and susceptibility to stand in the way of peace. The Turkish troops, I said, had given ample proof of their valour and devotion; they were generally admitted to be amongst the bravest in the world; Turkish diplomacy had certainly afforded equal proofs of courage—perhaps, I might venture to say, of too much courage—and of a determination to maintain what Turkey considered to be her dignity and independence. No one could, therefore, now accuse Turkey of either want of courage or of dignity, if, after showing all that she was determined and prepared to do in case of war, she was ready to make sacrifices, however great, in favour of peace. If, I added, His Imperial Majesty could secure that peace, which was so much desired and needed by every country in Europe, he would earn the lasting gratitude of all civilized nations, and would have achieved a glory not exceeded by that of any Monarch who had occupied the Imperial throne.

His Imperial Majesty answered, with great earnestness, that he was prepared to make every sacrifice in the interests of peace consistent with the dignity and independence of his country. He would not go to war unless absolutely driven to it by Russia, and in that case he had the most complete reliance upon the courage and devotion of his army and of his subjects. It was true that Turkey wanted money, and many of the resources of other nations, but Turkish soldiers could and would fight upon bread and water, and without pay, and were ready to die to a man rather than see their country humiliated. A friend, he said (he alluded to a gentleman whom I had induced to speak confidentially with him) had placed fully before him my views and opinions. He entirely concurred in them and he had so told his Ministers, who, he was glad to inform me, were disposed to listen to and to act upon my counsels.

I observed to His Imperial Majesty that I entertained no doubt whatever of the bravery and devotion of his army, and of the readiness of every man in it to die for his country; but I begged him to reflect that although these qualities were sufficient in the days of bows and arrows for conquest and defence, yet that war as now waged required other things, and above all money.

He said that this was true, but what was to be done? He did not want war. It was Russia that was intent upon driving him into it, and he feared that no sacrifices he could make would deter her from her purpose. Turkey was now only defending herself from a wanton aggression. He begged me again most earnestly to assure the Queen and

Her Majesty's Government that he ardently longed for peace. Without peace, he observed, how can I hope to carry out those reforms which are necessary to the prosperity and happiness of all classes of my people, and in which it is my firm desire to persevere; and above all is it necessary, he remarked with much warmth, that I should re-establish the reputation for honesty and the credit of my country, which have been unhappily shaken by measures for which I am not responsible and which I greatly deplore.

I have endeavoured to give your Lordship as faithful a report as possible of our conversation, the rest of which turned more upon personal matters. On my leaving, the Sultan gave me his hand, and, after saying many kind things, expressed a hope that I would come to him without hesitation whenever I might wish to see him, or have anything of importance to communicate; and he invited me to take a walk with him in his garden on some future day, as he would like to show me the improvements he had made in it.

His Imperial Majesty appeared to me in good health; his intellect perfectly clear. He spoke readily and with perfect good sense, and always to the point. As he was quite unprepared for what I might have to say to him, there could have been no prompting by his Ministers or others. His tone was melancholy, as that of a man almost in despair. He insisted upon his desire for peace in a very touching way, and with tears in his eyes. There could be no doubt as to his perfect sincerity. At times his countenance was lightened up with a most pleasant and winning smile. On the whole, he gave me the impression of a very amiable, well-intentioned, honest, thoughtful, and humane man: truly desirous of doing his utmost for the welfare of all classes of his people, but wanting in physical and moral energy, and likely to yield to the influence of stronger and more determined natures.

It was much remarked that Mahmoud Damat Pasha, the Sultan's brother-in-law, who is believed to exercise an evil influence over His Imperial Majesty, and to be the mainstay of the war party, was not present on the occasion of my audience. Indisposition was alleged to be the cause of his absence; but it was suspected that it was rather to be attributed to the success of the peace party in getting the appeal for the mediation of the Powers adopted.

It is deeply to be deplored that at the very moment that there was a ray of hope in favour of peace, Russia had taken the step which is to plunge this unhappy country into all the horrors and carnage of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 194.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 334. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 24, 1877.*

I HAVE received a visit from the Servian Agent, M. Christich, with whom I was formerly acquainted. I endeavoured to learn from him the course likely to be pursued by Servia in the event of a war between Turkey and Russia, and the state of public opinion in the Principality.

M. Christich belongs, I believe, to a party which is favourable to the Turkish connection, and is opposed to dependence upon Russia. Complete reliance may not, therefore, be placed upon his statements; but at anyrate they are perhaps worth submitting to your Lordship.

M. Christich assured me that although there was undoubtedly a party in Servia favourable to the policy of Russia, and ready to be directed entirely by her, yet that the great majority of the population was strongly opposed to anything like Russian domination. There was not a Servian out of Belgrade who was not convinced that it was to the interest of his country that it should retain the connection which had hitherto existed between it and Turkey. The Servians felt that if Servia is to continue in her present state of virtual independence, if she is to preserve her free constitutional institutions which have hitherto enabled her to make so much progress, it is by remaining under the suzerainty of the Porte, and under the guarantee and protection of the Treaties, which, he readily admitted, Turkey had religiously respected. Although M. Ristich, he added, was supposed to entertain opposite opinions, he could assure me, from an intimate acquaintance with him, that such was not the case, and that if the Servian Prime Minister had been compelled to follow a policy apparently hostile to Turkey, it was because he had been driven into it by

her obstinate refusal to listen to reasonable proposals, which, if accepted, might have avoided the war. He hinted that one of those proposals was the administration of the province of Bosnia by Servia. I did not think it necessary to express my opinion upon it.

M. Christich further stated that the Porte had recently complained to him that the Servian Government had consented to allow Russian troops to enter and pass through Servian territories in case of war, and had protested against it as a violation of neutrality, and of the Treaty recently concluded between Turkey and Servia. He had been able to give the Turkish Government the most solemn assurances that such was not the case, and that permission had not been given to Russia to cross the Danube at Kladova, into Servia. Russia knows, he observed, that any advantage she might gain by having this road into Turkey would not be worth the hostile feeling she would arouse in Servia if she attempted again to turn her into a battle-field. He had given, he said, explanations to the Turkish Government to that effect which appeared to satisfy them.

Some importance, M. Christich said, had been attached to a supposed popular movement in Servia in favour of Prince Karageorgevitch, which the Turkish Government appeared to think favourable to their interests in the Principality. He had sought to convince them that the intrigues in favour of this pretender came from the red Republicans who would throw over Karageorgevitch at once when it suited them to do so, as he was a man of no ability or influence, and that the only result of their success would be that they would inevitably bring about an insurrection throughout the whole Slav provinces of Turkey.

A Russian officer, General Faidieff, who was connected with the Slav party, represented by General Tchernaieff, had recently arrived, M. Christich said, at Belgrade. This visit had caused him great uneasiness, and he had at once written to M. Ristich to implore him not to commit himself to any course which could encourage this dangerous party, and again compromise the neutrality of Servia. He had received the most solemn assurances from M. Ristich that he had rejected the overtures of the Russian Agent, and that the visit of this officer to Belgrade had entirely failed in its object.

I expressed to M. Christich the satisfaction with which I had learnt from him that Servia had resolved to maintain a complete neutrality should war break out between Russia and Turkey, and I told him that I should have much pleasure in communicating the assurances which he had given me on this point to Her Majesty's Government. How far they are to be trusted I cannot pretend to say.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 195.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 343.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship copy of a despatch and its inclosure from Mr. Barker, Acting Consul at Salonica, reporting the destruction of a gang of robbers near Kurditza, in the Vilayet of Salonica.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 195.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, April 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch addressed by Mr. Vice-Consul Suter, of Larissa and Volo, to Mr. Consul Blunt, reporting on the capture and destruction of the gang of robbers headed by Giatropulo, and a copy of a telegram to that effect from Djavid Pasha, Mutessarif of that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 195.

Vice-Consul Suter to Consul Blunt.

Larissa, April 11, 1877.

Sir,

I INFORMED you by my letter of the 6th instant, that Djavid Pasha the Mutessarif of Thessaly, had gone from Larissa to Kurditza in pursuit of brigands; and I beg to subjoin copy of a circular telegram, received last night, which his Excellency has addressed to the foreign Consuls here, announcing the destruction of the gang led by the chief Giatropulo, which had infested that district for some months past.

The band in question was composed of five persons, including its leader, four of whom were killed, and one brought prisoner to Larissa.

The Pasha also succeeded in capturing "Photi," of some former brigand fame, respecting whom I made mention in my letter of 8th February last. This man confesses that he had been for some time with Giatropulo's party, and had recently left it, but refuses to declare why he did so, and with what future intentions.

The bands under the two brigand chiefs Calojeros and Karabatee or Karabataky, which are believed to consist together of thirty individuals, continue to elude all pursuit in their haunts about Katterina, but no acts committed by them have been reported.

The country in other directions is free from robbers and misdoers, and quiet prevails, and the holidays have passed off in good order everywhere.

Pursuant to orders lately received, the Mustahfiz troops of the province are now being mustered at Larissa; but I am informed that the call is by no means readily responded to. About 400 only, including 20 from this district, where, as you are aware, the Mahommedan population is very limited, have been so far enrolled; but, until my return next week to Larissa, I shall not be able to ascertain the precise number requisitioned and that may be collected.

The Government steamer "Medar Zafer" arrived here from Constantinople the 4th instant to relieve her sister ship, the "Essree Noosret," which had been the stationary war vessel in this port during the previous fifteen months. The latter mentioned steamer off for the capital the 5th.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. SUTER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 195.

The Governor of Thessaly to the English, French, Austrian, and Italian Consuls at Volo.

(Télégraphique.)

ABSENT depuis douze jours je profite du retour pour vous souhaiter bonnes et heureuses les fêtes. La chance m'ayant favorisé, la bande de Giatropulo, y compris le chef, a été détruite—deux prisonniers.

No. 196.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 346.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Sandison, inclosing a copy of Mr. Nelidoff's note to Safvet Pasha announcing the rupture of diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey; and also a copy of Safvet Pasha's instructions to the Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburgh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 196.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Constantinople, April 25, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of M. Nelidoff's note to Safvet Pasha, notifying the breaking off by Russia of diplomatic relations with Turkey, and a copy of the Porte's reply to it through its Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburgh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 196.

M. Nelidow to Safvet Pasha.

LE Cabinet Impérial de Russie a épuisé tous les moyens de conciliation pour rétablir une paix durable en Orient par une entente avec les Grandes Puissances et la Porte.

La manière dont le Gouvernement Ottoman a rejeté toutes les propositions qui lui ont été successivement faites et le refus qu'il vient d'opposer au Protocole signé à Londres le $\frac{1}{31}$ Mars, ainsi qu'à la déclaration dont cet acte était accompagné, ne laissent plus de place à des négociations ultérieures ni d'espoir quant à une entente basée sur le bon vouloir de la Porte à offrir les garanties réclamées par l'Europe au nom de la paix générale.

L'Empereur, mon auguste Maître, m'a en conséquence prescrit de rompre les relations diplomatiques et de quitter Constantinople avec le personnel de l'Ambassade et les Consuls de Russie résidant en Turquie. En même temps j'ai l'ordre de Sa Majesté Impériale de rendre la Porte attentive à la grave responsabilité qui peserait sur elle si la sécurité, non seulement de nos nationaux, mais encore de tous les Chrétiens, sujets du Sultan, ou étrangers, était compromise sur quelque point que ce soit de l'Empire Ottoman.

Inclosure 3 in No. 196.

Safvet Pasha to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburgh.

Le 23 *Avril*, 1877.

M. NELIDOW vient de quitter Constantinople avec le personnel de l'Ambassade de Russie. Au moment de partir il m'a fait trois communications. Dans la première il m'annonce, d'ordre de son Gouvernement, la rupture de nos relations diplomatiques; dans la seconde il désigne les autorités Consulaires Allemandes comme chargées de veiller aux intérêts de ses nationaux; dans la troisième, il fait des réserves quant à l'influence que cette rupture peut avoir sur les délais légaux dans les procès en cours.

M. Nélidow ayant quitté Constantinople avec tout le personnel de l'Ambassade et ayant donné à ses Consuls l'ordre de partir également, vous devez faire de même et sans retard, et transmettre à nos Consuls des instructions analogues.

Avant votre départ vous voudrez bien remettre au Ministère Russe une note ainsi conçue:—

M. le Chargé d'Affaires de Russie à Constantinople a annoncé à la Sublime Porte le $\frac{13}{25}$ de ce mois, qu'il a reçu de son Gouvernement l'ordre de rompre les relations diplomatiques et de quitter Constantinople avec le personnel de l'Ambassade et de retirer les Consuls établis dans différentes villes du territoire Ottoman.

Me conformant de mon côté aux instructions que je viens de recevoir, j'ai l'honneur d'exprimer le regret que la Sublime Porte éprouve en voyant le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie prendre l'initiative de la rupture de relations auxquelles la Sublime Porte s'était toujours appliquée à conserver le même caractère que par le passé, au milieu des circonstances les plus difficiles.

Cette résolution du Gouvernement Impérial de Russie ayant pourtant été officiellement annoncée à la Sublime Porte, elle se trouve placée dans la nécessité de faire une démarche analogue auprès du Gouvernement Impérial de Russie, en lui faisant connaître qu'elle vient de prescrire à son Chargé d'Affaires à St. Pétersbourg et à ses Consuls en

Russie de quitter le territoire Russe. La Sublime Porte espère que le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie voudra bien donner les ordres nécessaires aux autorités compétentes pour que le personnel diplomatique et Consulaire Ottoman puisse trouver auprès d'elles les facilités d'usage en pareil cas. Quant aux sujets Ottomans résidant en Russie, le Gouvernement ami auquel la Sublime Porte confiera incessamment la protection de leurs intérêts, fera à ce sujet la communication nécessaire.

Dans une seconde pièce vous voudrez bien faire connaître au Gouvernement Russe que M. Nélidow, ayant fait remettre à la Sublime Porte au moment de son départ une note par laquelle il croit devoir établir certaines réserves en faveur des droits des sujets Russes qui, se trouvant dans le territoire Ottoman, ont des réclamations non liquidées ou des procès en cours, vous êtes chargé de votre côté de faire les mêmes réserves au profit des sujets Ottomans qui sont en Russie et qui se trouvent dans des conditions analogues, que notamment pour toutes les réclamations des sujets Ottomans non liquidées vous réservez expressément les droits de nos nationaux aussi bien pour le fond que pour les dommages-intérêts qu'ils auraient à exiger du fait des retards apportés jusqu'ici par les autorités Russes dans le jugement de leurs affaires, ou dans l'exécution des sentences rendues en leur faveur; que de plus, il semble nécessaire de constater dès aujourd'hui que le temps d'arrêt qui serait amené par le fait de l'interruption des relations diplomatiques entre les deux pays dans le cours régulier des réclamations des sujets Ottomans pendantes par devant les Tribunaux Russes ne saurait en aucun cas préjudicier au bien fondé de leurs prétentions, et que ce temps d'arrêt, comme cas de force majeure, suspend provisoirement l'effet de tous les termes légaux et des droits de prescription dont les intérêts des nationaux Ottomans auraient à souffrir.

No. 197.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 347. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, copy of an interesting and able paper drawn up by General Sir Arnold Kemball, at my request, with reference to the means of defence against Russia possessed by Turkey on her Asiatic frontier, and to the results to be anticipated from the success of the Russian arms in that part of the Turkish Empire. Sir Arnold Kemball's remarks appear to me well worthy of the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 197.

Memorandum by Sir A. Kemball on Turkish Means of Defence against Russia in Asia.

THE Asiatic frontier of Turkey is conterminous with Russia for a distance roughly speaking of 350 miles, extending from a point on the coast of the Black Sea some 18 miles north of Batoum to Mount Ararat, where it begins to be conterminous with Persia.

It consists throughout of a chain of mountains inaccessible to an army save where crossed at three or four points, by the vallies of inconsiderable streams all more or less difficult of transit. The heads of these passages and their "débouchés" are respectively commanded by important posts in either country.

Those in Russia are:—

Akhalsjik.
Akhalkhalik.
Alexandropol.
Erivan.

On the side of Turkey are:—

Batoum.
Ardahan.
Kars.
Bayazid.

One peculiarity may be noticed as distinguishing these two lines of defence in that the advantage is enjoyed by the Russians of free and easy communication between their several centres, whereas the Turkish posts are comparatively isolated by the interposition of spurs from the mountain range impassable by troops.

The posts on the Turkish side are believed at the capital to be efficiently garrisoned, armed, and provisioned, and the belief is to a certain extent corroborated by the accounts of travellers who have witnessed the works in progress—though not yet completed—on the spot; I can certify only upon competent authority that more than a month ago Batoum had been placed in a good state of defence, but Batoum is a seaport, whereas the transport of goods, ammunition, and provisions into the interior over mountain tracks in the rainy season is a work of time and great difficulty, suggestive of doubt as to the complete accuracy of Turkish professions in respect to the other posts.

Assuming the fact, however, to be established, as stated, and the forces on either side to be equal or nearly so in respect more especially to mobility, it is clear that the general configuration of the country leaves the balance of advantages immeasurably with the Turks in their resistance to Russian invasion because, while compelling the invaders to divide their strength over the several lines of approach and precluding concert and co-operation between the advancing columns on Turkish soil, it enables the defenders, after securing their fortresses with adequate garrisons to concentrate their remaining forces at some point which could observe all these lines and give them the preponderance at time and place predetermined on any one of them.

Such a point happily presents itself in the chain of the Soghanli Dagh, covering Erzeroom, a position of great natural strength, which the Turks are said to have intrenched with a view to the plan of operations here suggested. It is to be hoped that the chances in favour of its success may not be counterbalanced by their unreadiness, want of means of defence, and defective organization.

Before enumerating the several passes through which the Russian forces could penetrate into Turkish territory, I may mention the coast road viâ Batoum as being alone free from physical difficulties. While, however, Turkish men-of-war hold command of the sea, this road must be too much exposed to the fire of their guns to be considered practicable.

Moreover, from the same cause, it appears to me the capture of Batoum must prove a barren conquest. Not only would the place itself be untenable while the war lasted, but its occupation would entail a needless diversion of forces, seeing that, if the campaign issued in the complete discomfiture of the Turks, the cession of Batoum would certainly be exacted as the much-coveted prize of victory.

Batoum is popularly believed to have only escaped the grasp of Russia at the end of the war of 1829 by a clerical error in the draft of the Treaty of Peace.

Be that as it may, its value, as possessing the only harbour throughout the whole extent of coast from Trebizond to Kertch, could not be overrated, and its capabilities as a commercial port in Russian hands would need very little development to render it the general emporium of trade for all the regions bordering the Black Sea and the Caspian south of the Caucasus.

Beyond the coast road to Batoum, where the frontier chain of mountains abuts closely on the sea, the first of the passes into Turkish territory is formed by the defile in front of Akhilzek, which follows the course of a minor affluent of the Kur River, descending from the Pozgho crests. It is, perhaps, the most difficult of the series, and would be practically available only for small detachments of troops co-operating in a general plan of attack.

Leading directly on Ardahan, it there unites with the road over the second defile coming from Akhalkaki, which is only less difficult of access, and to as little extent practicable for an army.

Ardahan, the objective of both these routes, must be captured or contained, prior to a further advance. Nor, supposing the expedition to be so far successful, could the forces engaged operate with effect over the difficult mountain tracks, if tolerably defended, which lead from that place on Kars and Erzeroum respectively.

The remaining routes traversing the frontier chain from Alexandropol (Grumi) on Kars, and from Erivan by Bulkliful on the north, by Bayazid on the south, to strike in each case the great caravan road from Persia, are those by which Russian invasion has been mainly prosecuted in former campaigns. Their advance on the present occasion will probably be attempted over the same routes, and the principal attack would then be made on the line of Topsak Kuhan.

There is still one other route threatening Erzeroum, which, by turning Mount Ararat, presents even greater facilities to the invader than those last-mentioned. I allude to the continuation of the caravan road viâ Maker.

Its use would, of course, involve a violation of the neutrality of Persia; nevertheless, did the Shah not side in the war against Turkey, it would at least be available to the Russians for the transport of stores and provisions.

The forces of the Russians on the Turco-Russian frontier are estimated in round numbers at 100,000 men, exclusive of reserves of 30,000 men, which may hereafter be available to reinforce the army.

Of these, after deducting the troops required to garrison their own border fortresses, to preserve their lines of communication, and to menace or contain the Turkish garrisons of Batoum, Ardahan, Kars, and Bayazid, I should be disposed to limit the strength of the expeditionary column to 50,000 or 60,000 men. Nor, I believe, would the resources of the Russians be equal to the support of even so large a body, if it sustained a serious check, or if the resistance to its advance could be at all protracted.

On the Turkish side, the aggregate defensive forces are vaguely estimated between 60,000 and 80,000 men. These figures, excluding the detachments necessary to garrison the strong places referred to, supplemented as they are pretty efficiently by the militia of the towns, would leave between 30,000 and 50,000 men available for concentration in the first line of the Saghanli Dagh covering Erzeroum.

But, numbers apart, if we analyze the elements of the two armies, the superiority must, no doubt, be assigned in point of equipments, organization, and material resources, to the Russian, supported, as it is said to be, by a body of excellent cavalry.

The Turks must trust for any advantage to the well-known tenacity of their soldiers in the defence of intended positions, to the character of the country, and, finally, to the restricted range of operations, a condition to them of vital consequence, as obviating the need of extended strategical combinations.

They, too, profess to have engaged the services of a still larger contingent of cavalry, composed of Circassian and Kurdish levées, but these auxiliaries are not easily held together and under stress of any kind may hardly be depended on for the operations of regular warfare.

I cannot pretend to give further reliable details of the topography of the country under review, or to predicate with any degree of accuracy the issue of the defence projected by the Turks as to which we possess most imperfect data. Arguing, however, for the purposes of this paper that the struggle has issued after the first onset in the discomfiture of the Turkish army, and looking to the social and political conditions of the country and populations concerned, and to the absence of any reserves, military or material, I am unable to resist the conviction that the disaster would be irretrievable.

It has been suggested that Erzeroom would furnish a refuge and a second line of defence to the beaten Turks, and great efforts, it is alleged, have recently been made to cover the city with a fortified camp.

I do not question the defensive capacity of Erzeroom as a military position, but when relief is hopeless, and the supplies of a large town population are in question, it is only too likely that the improvidence and impecuniosity of the Government have precluded adequate preparations against the contingencies of a siege or simple investment.

The remnant of the Turkish army would, as it were, be caught in a trap, and the result of the fall of Erzeroom would be to paralize the Ottoman authority in Asia, and to reduce the Porte to sue for terms at the mercy of the conquerors.

How far these terms would be fatal to the continued existence of the Turkish Empire, and how far they must, therefore, vitally affect British interests, may easily be conceived. In so far only as they should involve the occupation of so considerable a portion of Turkish territory as a material guarantee for the concessions demanded, they must, I believe, call for urgent remonstrance on our part, and if, then, active military intervention were contemplated, the disembarkation of a Corps d'Armée on the coast of the Black Sea, with the organisation of a Turkish contingent of equal or twofold strength to be paid by England and officered by Englishmen, would alone suffice to restore the equilibrium.

For the mastery obtained by Russia over Turkish soil would not only extend to all the territory under her occupation as far as Erzinghian, Kharpout, and Diarbekir, comprising the Province of Leisistan, all Turkish Armenia, and the settled portion of Kurdistan, but would also involve in a manner prospectively more injurious to England a dominant influence over all the regions and peoples intervening on either hand up to the very shores of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and of the Persian Gulf.

Apart also from the immediate acquisition of provinces well-populated and rich in agricultural and mineral products, inhabited by races alien in blood and to a great extent in religion, to the Turks, therefore easily assimilated by Russia, and when assimilated, providing an immense accession to her aggressive forces. A glance at the map will suffice

to show that Russia would at once gain the command of all the lines of communication overland from the seat of Government at Constantinople to Syria and Turkish Arabia.

The head waters of the Euphrates and Tigris would be in her possession, and viewing the character of the tribes agglomerated on the banks of these rivers, down to their united embouchure in the Persian Gulf, the ancient traditions of these tribes, and the want of homogeneity, if not the antagonism which is inherent to their political existence, it is easy to foresee the early severance of their connection with Constantinople without direct sinister action on the part of the Russians, and their dissolution again into semi-independent chiefships, whose recurring feuds and dissensions must eventually entail their absorption by a powerful neighbour.

Scarcely thirty years have elapsed since the petty Kurdish domains of Rewanduz, Jesgreh, Sulemanieh, &c., through professing vassalage and paying tribute to the Porte, were ruled by hereditary chiefs whose suppression and the substitution in their room of Turkish Governors, was attended with very serious troubles, narrowly provoking collisions with Persia.

Again, in the remote districts of the Kurdish mountains, the authority of the Porte is still precariously exerted, and even to this day the position of the Turks throughout Turkish Arabia resembles that of conquerors without social hold or regular administrative control over the inhabitants.

The system of government there practised, so far from contributing to develope the resources of the country, and to promote the stability of the dominant race, has reduced the province to the last stage of decadence, and the administration of the rural districts being exclusively in the hands of hereditary or local chiefs, whose fiscal contributions partake rather of the character of tribute than of revenue, Ottoman authority has been maintained only at the risk of chronic rebellions by the expedients naturally incidental to the principle of dividing in order to rule.

Except very partially in some of the towns, and in insignificant numbers, the conscription could never be brought into operation in Turkish Arabia, and in the adjacent Kurdish districts it is as yet enforced with difficulty and with small results.

Such being the state of things arising out of a long period of misgovernment I shall not probably be accused of exaggerating the effect of defeat in discrediting the prestige of the Porte in the dislocated provinces, or of over-estimating the injury likely to accrue to our own interests upon the establishment of Russian dominancy.

How far the same remarks apply to Turkish rule in Syria, imperfect information will not permit me to determine, but the situation there I apprehend, though favourably affected by the sea-board of the Mediterranean, differs only in degree from that of Turkish Arabia.

Moreover, the disintegration of the territory watered by the Tigris and Euphrates is only too likely to be accelerated by the action of Persia in connection with the impending crisis.

However contemptible she may be as a military Power, there can be no doubt that Persia has the means under existing circumstances, owing to the relations between the tribes on either frontier, as well as to the religious sympathies of Persians with the fixed population of Lower Mesopotamia, seriously to embarrass the Turks in their death-struggle with Russia.

The military force which Persia has contrived to mobilise is believed to aggregate 215,000 men of all arms, divided into two camps, which have been formed at Sgohab and Khoi, and which threaten respectively Bagdad and Kotoor.

Both objectives mark the real aspirations of Persia, and confirm the resolution, though ostensibly proceeding on separate grounds, to take advantage of the occasion if war should ensue to realize here own pretensions.

By way of masking her alliance with infidels against Mahommedans, she has more prominently alleged her staple religious grievances (as more recently illustrated in the reported massacre and maltreatment of Persian pilgrims in the city of Medineh) in order to justify her subservience to Russian policy, and, starting with such a ground of quarrel, she may further count upon the support and sympathy of the nation in any attempt to obtain possession, however temporary, of the Shiak shrines beyond the Euphrates.

But in respect to Kotoor, Persia is, unfortunately, in a position to assert a political grievance, which, though of long standing, originally constituted a legitimate *casus belli*, and has only since been kept within the scope of negotiation and mediation by the joint influence of England and Russia.

I allude to the forcible occupation by Turkey in 1847-48 of the district of Kotoor, then in the possession of Persia, under circumstances which both the Mediating Powers pronounced to be wrongful and unjustifiable.

The rights of property in Kotoor had been virtually secured to Persia by a Convention just previously concluded at Erzeroom, under the auspices of the same Powers, for the settlement of frontier differences between the two countries. By that Convention the existing *status quo*, which, in respect to Kotoor, was not disputed, had been commonly adopted as the basis of delimitation, yet, on the eve of its execution by means of an International Commission, assembled at Bagdad for the purpose, Turkish troops entered the district, and forcibly dispossessed the Persian authorities, nor have the repeated protests of Persia, or the remonstrances which her appeals have elicited from the Mediating Powers, prevailed for its restitution into her hands.

The renewed Frontier Commission, to which I am Delegate on the part of Her Majesty's Government, has not, it is true, completed its labours; but, inasmuch as their prosecution has now been indefinitely suspended, and one of the said Mediating Powers has assumed an attitude directed to the special redress of Turkish shortcomings, it is not of course surprising that the Persian Government should allow itself to be drawn into a coalition which (were it in any case avoidable) may be plausibly justified by the promise it affords of enforcing a legitimate claim.

This open quarrel between the two Mahommedan States has at least been turned to account by Russia, with or without previous intention, for the promotion of her own ambitious designs, and must hamper an advocacy of neutrality on the side of Persia until the Porte should be induced to withdraw from a position which we ourselves have declared to be untenable.

Although it hardly falls within my province to remark upon the final issues of the war now impending between Turkey and Russia, I cannot forego the reflection that, while our interests in European Turkey are merged in the general concert of international rights and obligations, our interests in Asiatic Turkey are entrusted to the exclusive safeguard of an ally whose strength is certainly inadequate to their protection.

If I have rightly assumed that the line of least resistance at present lies in the East, it follows, notwithstanding the magnitude of the preparations made on the Danube, that the real attack will come from the Asiatic side.

On that side, too, I have endeavoured to show that a blow delivered with success would more effectually paralyze the sources of Government; and although the Turkish defence will no doubt be distinguished by the wonted bravery of the soldiers, the odds against them appear to be so overwhelming, that the country, menaced with invasion on every frontier and distracted by insurrection at home, would be reduced to the last extremity.

In that case I venture to repeat that the sacrifices required to vindicate our position must be measured in their aggravation by the forces now operating in our favour, but which would be dissipated if not turned against us.

(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

No. 198.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 349.) *Constantinople, April* 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the satisfaction to inform your Lordship that, partly through my representations, Nasif Pasha, Vali of Bosnia, against whom there appear to have been numerous and just complaints, has been dismissed, and Mazhar Pasha, the Governor of Sophia, of whom I hear a favourable report, has been appointed in his stead.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 199.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 350. Most Confidential.) *Constantinople, April* 26, 1877.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH the efforts that I have made to preserve peace unfortunately came too late, it is my duty to inform your Lordship fully as to the course that I have taken.

Immediately on my arrival here I saw the Grand Vizier. The result of my interview with him was reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 319 of 21st instant. My

principal object in seeking his Highness without a moment's delay was to ascertain, as far as I was able, whether there was still any hope of inducing the Porte to make concessions which might be acceptable to Russia, and, if not, whether any proposal could be made by the Ottoman Government which might afford a basis for the mediation of the other Powers, parties to the Treaty of Paris. I soon found that as regards any concessions to Russia, there was so much irritation against her, that it was hopeless to expect anything in that direction from the Turkish Government. The refusal of the Grand Vizier to entertain the proposal to send a Special Ambassador to St. Petersburgh to treat of mutual disarmament, and to come to an arrangement with the Russian Government on other points, was so decisive that I thought it advisable not to press the matter. There only remained, therefore, to afford the British, French, German, Austrian, and Italian Governments some opportunity of again intervening in the interest of peace. An appeal on the part of the Ottoman Government to the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris naturally suggested itself. Your Lordship will recollect that this appeal was spoken of by the Duc Decazes at my interview with him, on my passing through Paris, as offering a possible solution of the differences between Turkey and Russia.

I consequently suggested the appeal to the Grand Vizier. He seemed inclined to entertain the idea. On the following morning I spoke on the subject to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who appeared to be even more favourably disposed to act upon it. The matter was referred to the Council, and I soon learnt, as I had apprehended, that the war party, whose object all along has been to prevent peace, had passed a decision against having recourse to the Article, and that the Grand Vizier had yielded to their influence.

In the meanwhile I had seen the President of the Chamber, Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, with whom I have a long-standing friendship, and he had promised me to use all his influence with the Sultan and in other directions in favour of the appeal and of peace. Some other persons, whose acquaintance I have renewed, and especially one who is much esteemed by the Sultan, and has at all times free access to him, made me similar promises. The gentleman, to whom I specially allude, saw the Sultan on the two following nights, and informed me that he found His Majesty ready to make a last effort to prevent war, and that my suggestion as to an appeal to the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris had made a very favourable impression upon him.

The arguments which I had used in discussing this question are for the most part contained in a confidential Memorandum which I made for the guidance of Mr. Sandison in addressing himself to the Turkish Ministers on the subject, copy of which I have the honour to inclose . . . . I beg your Lordship to consider it merely as a few notes hastily put on paper rather than as a document having anything of an official character. The copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Sandison as to the effect produced by my arguments upon the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha is also inclosed.

After a severe struggle between the war and peace parties, the latter prevailed, and I learnt in the morning of the day that I had my audience of the Sultan that the Council had finally decided upon making the appeal to the Powers. During my private audience with the Sultan he hinted to me that such had been the case.

Just before leaving the Embassy for the Palace I received your Lordship's telegram informing me that the German Government would gladly co-operate with that of Her Majesty and the other Powers if the Porte made the appeal. To this I attached great importance, as it appeared to secure to a certain extent to Turkey the approval of the four Powers in making this last attempt in the interest of peace. The Austrian Chargé d'Affaires had, I understand, expressed his concurrence in my views at the Porte.

Unhappily, at the very moment that affairs here appeared to be taking a favourable turn, and there was a glimmer of a hope of peace, the Russian Government entered upon war. The Russian action may have been precipitated, as some suspect, by the fear that Turkey might take a step which would prevent a recourse to arms. Others believe that the knowledge that a demonstration against the Russian invasion of Roumania was about to be made in the Roumanian Chambers, which were to assemble on the 25th or 26th, hastened the Russian advance across the Pruth. Be this as it may, whilst I was in the Palace receiving the most earnest assurances from the Sultan of his desire for peace and his readiness to make every sacrifice to insure it, the telegram from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburgh, communicating Prince Gortchakow's note announcing war, was being deciphered at the Porte.

It may, perhaps, be important to note that the decision of the Porte to appeal to the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris was come to before war was declared, as the Article requires that the Appeal should be made before recourse is had to force.

I have already mentioned to your Lordship, in my despatch No. 332, describing my

audience of the Sultan, the fact of the absence from it of Mahmoud Damat Pasha, which was attributed, I cannot say with what reason, to the defeat of the war party, of which he is the leader, on this question of the appeal.

Had the appeal on the part of the Porte to the mediation of the Powers been successful my next object, subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Government, would have been to endeavour to induce the Turkish Government to accept the Protocol of London, which, with some modifications in the "redaction" of no essential importance, I am inclined to believe I could have succeeded in doing.

This last attempt to maintain peace has unhappily failed, but I trust that the results of my endeavours will furnish one more proof of the earnest desire and continued efforts of Her Majesty's Government to prevent war will place Turkey in a somewhat better position in public opinion, and may possibly afford hereafter an opening for mediation between the two belligerent Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 199.

Memorandum by Mr. Layard.

(Most Confidential.)

THE advantage to the Porte of an appeal to the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris would be—

1. That Turkey, by making this last effort in favour of peace, whether successful or not, would place herself in a better position than she now holds before the public opinion of the world. Her answer to the Protocol, whatever may have been its intention, has been universally considered as a defiance and provocation to Russia, who avails herself of this impression to lead Europe to believe that Turkey alone is responsible for the war which may ensue.

It is of the utmost importance to Turkey that this impression should be removed, and the best mode of doing so is by showing that she is willing and ready to make peace, and to place herself in the hands of the Mediating Powers with that object. She has assuredly done enough by her answer to the Protocol and by her conduct hitherto to vindicate her dignity and her rights, such as she considers them to be, and there could not possibly be any loss of dignity on her part in offering to submit her cause to the consideration and decision of impartial and friendly mediating Powers.

As regards any fear of compromising her independence and integrity, as guaranteed to her by the Treaty of Paris, and especially recognized and upheld by England, the Porte might reserve all questions affecting them in the case submitted for mediation.

2. That Turkey would make a most favourable impression in England by accepting the hand held out to her, perhaps for the last time. It must not be forgotten that the declarations made by the British Government as to the impossibility of coming to the aid of Turkey in case of a war with Russia remain in full force, and that public opinion in England would not support or approve any Government that was prepared to help Turkey. It is of vital importance to Turkey that she should seek to change or modify this opinion, and the best way to do so is to show that she is ready to make reasonable sacrifices in the interests of peace.

3. If Turkey is anxious that the present state of things should cease, and that Russia should be compelled to declare war, a proposal for mediation on her part would be more likely than anything else to make Russia come to a decision, and to avoid loss of time. Russia would have either to accept mediation or to refuse. In the first case she would be placing herself under the control of the Powers who might call upon her to disarm, and Turkey might either disarm of her own free will, relying upon the support of the mediating Powers, either making a condition on the subject or not, as might appear most prudent, or she might propose an immediate simultaneous disarmament as the first condition of the mediation. If Russia refused this condition, she would undoubtedly place herself in the wrong before public opinion.

4. Turkey can lose nothing by appealing to the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris, which it is her right, or rather her duty, to do. If the appeal succeeds, so much the better; if it does not, Turkey is precisely in the same position as regards her defensive and other measures with the immense advantage of having given a proof to the world of her earnest desire for peace. If through her attitude that peace is obtained, she will enjoy and deserve the gratitude of all civilized nations.

5. It may be pointed out that the appeal to the mediation of the Powers may be considered obligatory, and that, as Turkey has shown the greatest anxiety that the Treaty of Paris should be observed in all its particulars and details, it is perhaps of very vital importance to her that she should not omit to observe an Article which, according to its terms, appears to be obligatory upon the contracting parties, viz., that before resorting to force they should appeal to the mediation of the other Signatory Powers. It must be borne in mind that Russia has made more than one attempt to obtain a declaration that the Treaty of Paris is null, or has become of no effect. The Turkish Government should meet this argument by adhering and insisting upon the observance of every Article in it that has not been specifically modified or revoked. It must be further observed, as a plea for urgency, that if hostilities have once commenced, the VIIIth Article is no longer in vigour.

Inclosure 2 in No. 199.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 25, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE already had the honour to report verbally to your Excellency the good disposition shown by the Sultan to get his Ministers to follow your advice and urgent recommendations to the effect that the Porte should lose no time in appealing, under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris, to the mediation of the Great Powers as a means which afforded some prospect of averting the danger of the impending war with Russia, and as a step which would, at all events, place Turkey in an advantageous position in the eyes of Europe.

In accordance with your Excellency's instructions, I did not fail to speak most earnestly on the subject to Safvet Pasha on Sunday last. His Excellency having referred me to the Grand Vizier, I laid the case before his Highness in the light you had directed me, without, however, receiving any encouraging reply that the Porte would agree to the step so urgently recommended.

The Memorandum, however, which your Excellency directed me to read confidentially to the Grand Vizier on Monday last, did not fail to produce a strong impression on the Turkish Ministers, on Safvet Pasha in particular, who stated that he fully concurred in your views, and that he would, consequently, impress them on his colleagues at the Council of Ministers, which was to have met at his private residence last night.

I have had the honour to communicate to your Excellency this afternoon the decision of the Council, which would seem to be in the sense you had suggested.

I beg to add, in conclusion, that, in accordance with your Excellency's instructions, as conveyed to me through M. Mariniteh at the Porte, I did not fail to represent to Safvet Pasha the extreme inadvisability of the Porte claiming, as it intended doing, the benefit of the Tripartite Alliance of 1856, instead of fulfilling its obligations in regard to the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris. No appeal with that view has, however, as yet been made by the Porte to the signatories of the Tripartite Alliance, but as there seems to be an intention of doing so, your Excellency is in time to prevent the step being taken, should you think it inopportune.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 200.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 351. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE received visits from the heads of most of the religious communities in Turkey, the Patriarch of the Gregorian Armenians, the Vekyl, Bishop representing the Roman Catholic Armenians, the Patriarch of the Syrians, the Agent of the Greek Patriarch, and others. The unanimity with which they expressed their hostility to Russia, and their desire to continue under Turkish rule rather than pass under that of Russia, is very remarkable. They all declared that under the Turkish Government they were not molested in the profession and practice of their religion, whereas the Russian was an intolerant Government under which they could not expect to enjoy religious freedom.

It is possible that they may have used this language under the impression that it

would be agreeable to me; but, at the same time, from all I can learn, the Christians of Turkey, with the exception perhaps of some of the Slav populations, though certainly not of all, are by no means desirous of exchanging the Turkish for the Russian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 201.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 352. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 26, 1877.

I RECEIVED a visit to-day from the Armenian (Gregorian) Patriarch. His Eminence came to compliment me on my arrival, and to speak to me confidentially with respect to the condition and opinions of his people. The statement he made to me was to the following effect:—

He said that the Armenian nation would far prefer remaining under the Ottoman rule to being placed under that of Russia. Within the Turkish dominions they were allowed the free profession and practice of their religion, whilst in Russia such was not the case, and they had already had proofs that she intended, little by little, to compel them to abandon their ancient faith for that of the Greek Church. This they were resolved never to do. Their interests were those of the Turks, and they saw a better chance of prosperity and freedom by remaining Ottoman subjects than by turning Russians. They had nothing to complain of as regards their treatment in Constantinople and in the adjacent provinces; they held places of honour and importance, and exercised a great influence on the government and administration of the Empire.

Yesterday, when the Russian Declaration of War was announced in the Chambers, the Ottoman Deputies, his Eminence said, unanimously acclaimed their determination to support the Sultan in the contest at every sacrifice, and none were more enthusiastic than the Armenian representatives.

His Eminence urged that the Turkish Government should encourage this spirit in the Armenian people by affording them every possible favour and protection. He admitted that at Van and in parts of Armenia the fanatical Kurds, who were guilty of the principal outrages of which the Armenian Christians complained, were almost beyond the control of the Central Government; but, he added, although the Kurds set fire to the bazaars at Van, the Turkish soldiers joined in the pillage. The Porte had promised to institute a strict and impartial inquiry into this affair, and to punish the guilty with severity.

His Eminence said that it was on the representations of Her Majesty's Government that this promise had been given, for which he and his people were very grateful; but he regretted to say that it had not yet been fulfilled. This had caused an unfavourable impression amongst the Armenians. The Turkish Government must not forget that one of the Patriarchs of the Armenian Church, who still exercised a considerable influence over the nation—the Patriarch of Echmiadgin—was now a Russian subject, and that the Russian Government had purposely placed Armenians in posts of dignity and trust in the army now invading Armenia, with the object of gaining the aid and sympathy of the Armenian Christians. His Eminence believed that they would have no chance of success if the Porte only gave proofs of its intention to treat the Armenians with justice, and to protect them in their property and lives. If it would do this, it might raise an Armenian militia, or civil guard, which, with the Mussulmans, would be ready to defend their country and cities against the Russian invaders.

I told the Patriarch that I had heard with much satisfaction the statement that he had made to me. I had always believed that if the Sultan gave his Christian subjects that share in the administration of public affairs to which they were entitled, and placed them on a footing of perfect equality with Mussulmans, as it was his interest and duty as a Sovereign to do, the Armenians would take a very leading part in the Government of the Turkish Empire, and attain to great wealth and prosperity. They were peculiarly and favourably situated, as from their political position they could not cause any suspicion or jealousy to the Turks.

I promised his Eminence to do my best to obtain a proper inquiry into the occurrences at Van and the punishment of the guilty.

I have instructed Mr. Sandison to represent to Safvet Pasha how necessary it is in the interest of the Turkish Government themselves, to conciliate the Armenians, and to prove

to them their determination to afford them the most ample protection by the punishment of those who were concerned in the outrages at Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 202.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 354.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 28, 1877.

M. COUNDOURIOTTIS, the Greek Minister, called upon me soon after my arrival here, and entered very fully into the question of the relations between Turkey and Greece.

His statements amounted to this—that Greece was entirely opposed to the policy of Russia with regard to Turkey, which was in favour of the Slavs, and, consequently, antagonistic to the Greeks, and that she was resolutely determined that Slav influence should not predominate in Macedonia and Thessaly. It was to her a vital matter to prevent the Greek population in Turkey in Europe being swallowed up by the Slavs. Consequently, it was to her interest not to cause any trouble or embarrassment to Turkey, but to remain quiet.

He could, he said, give me the most positive assurances that for the present the Porte had nothing to fear from Greece, and so he had told the Turkish Government.

However, the Porte must remember that Greece had her own policy and aspirations, and if the Turkish armies experienced any serious reverses, and a rising of the Greek population in Turkey was the consequence, as it certainly would be, no Greek Government could prevent the Greeks from coming to the help of their brothers. In that case Greece would insist upon annexing Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epirus, provinces to which she considered she had a right in the event of the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire.

M. Coundouriottis added that his only fear was with regard to Crete. The Porte had refused to make reasonable concessions to the Christian inhabitants of the island, and there was great discontent amongst them. If, profiting by the difficulties of Turkey, they were to rise, it would be very difficult indeed to prevent Greece from going to their assistance.

He had, consequently, earnestly represented to the Porte the necessity, in its own interests, of endeavouring to satisfy the legitimate demands of the Cretans, and thus to take away from them an excuse for rebellion. He hoped that I would speak in the same sense to the Turkish Ministers.

I requested Mr. Sandison to make some observations on the subject to Safvet Pasha, and to endeavour to ascertain his Excellency's views with regard to Crete.

His Excellency did not seem much inclined to enter upon the matter, and appeared to think that the Porte had not much to apprehend from that quarter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 203.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 355.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 29, 1877.

I YESTERDAY received the usual official visits from the Turkish Ministers, the Officers of State, the Senators, and the principal functionaries of the Government. Owing to the pressing nature of their occupations the Ministers of War and Marine were unable to come.

During the reception, which lasted four hours, I had an opportunity of speaking with men of different political opinions and views. I found a general and profound indignation against the manner in which their country had been treated by Russia; a hope that the sudden and unexampled way in which she had commenced war would be resented by Europe, and a conviction that in the end England would not abandon Turkey.

I held the same language to them that I had held to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha. I warned them that they must be under no delusion as to public opinion in England, and that Turkey could not look forward to any help from her;

Upon that point I begged them clearly to understand that Her Majesty's Government maintained the decision which had been communicated to them by Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliot. I represented to them, in the strongest terms, the impression fatal to Turkey, that had been made in England by the severe punishment inflicted upon Bulgarian Christians, whilst those Mussulmans who had been guilty of the outrages, which had aroused the indignation of the whole civilized world, had been allowed to escape with impunity. I ventured to say that for the sake of saving the lives of three or four men, whom the Turkish Commission itself had condemned to death, the Turkish Government had forfeited the friendship and alliance of England, and was about to sacrifice the lives of tens of thousands of innocent Mussulmans.

There was a professed acquiescence with what I said on the part of most of those to whom I spoke, and I trust that some impression may have been made upon them; but I fear that, were it even possible to obtain the signal punishment of the principal authors of the Bulgarian outrages, the time is past for such a step, on the part of the Porte, to modify to any great extent the public opinion of Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 204.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 358.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30, 1877.*

IN pursuance of the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram to Mr. Jocelyn of the 13th instant, I informed Safvet Pasha, on my first interview with his Excellency, that Her Majesty's Government were ready to use their good offices to bring about a settlement of the differences that had arisen between Turkey and Persia. His Excellency stated in reply that those differences might be considered as already settled, as the Persian Minister had just agreed to the Porte's proposal to send a Commission to Medina to inquire into a disturbance which had taken place in the Mosque there, and in which some Persians are alleged to have been killed and wounded. His Excellency said that the affair had, he had reason to believe, been much exaggerated; that it was one of those frays which frequently take place between the rival sects of Sunis and Shiahs at the sacred shrines. There only remained the removal of Abbas Mirza, the Shah's brother, from Bagdad, demanded by the Persian Government. The Porte had refused to violate the laws of hospitality by ejecting him forcibly from that city, but steps had been taken to prevail upon him to come to Constantinople.

The day after I saw Mohsin Khan, the Persian Minister, and on communicating to him my conversation with Safvet Pasha, he said that his Excellency had misinformed me. He stated that at one time Safvet Pasha was disposed to grant a Joint Commission to inquire into the outrages alleged to have been committed on Persian subjects at Medina, but that his Excellency now alleged that the Council had refused to allow a Persian Representative to be upon the Commission. To this Persia could not agree. As regards the removal of Abbas Mirza to Constantinople, he was willing to accept the arrangement on condition that no special honour should be shown him, and that he should not be openly treated by the Porte as a member of the Royal Family of Persia. I telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad to use any influence he might have with Abbas Mirza to prevail upon him to come here.

I saw Mohsin Khan, and communicated with Safvet Pasha several times on this subject. It was evident that the Porte, whose authority at Medina is really very limited, as the influence of the Sheriff of Mecca is there supreme, was unwilling to allow a Persian to be on the Commission. It feared the fanaticism of the Sunis and further difficulties. A proposal was then made that a Joint Commission should pursue the inquiry at Jeddah, to which the Persian Minister agreed; but Safvet Pasha objected to the distance of that place from Medina, and the difficulty of bringing there the necessary witnesses. The last proposal has been that the Porte should consult the Sheriff of Mecca to ascertain if he would offer no objection to the presence of a Persian Representative on the Commission, and to an investigation on the spot.

The good offices of Her Majesty's Government, although not yet formally accepted by the Porte, have thus been tacitly admitted. Whilst I have been doing my best to bring about an arrangement between Safvet Pasha and Mohsin Khan, the latter has been assuring me that his desire and that of the Persian nation is to establish a cordial understanding between Turkey and Persia, two Mussulman nations which ought to unite to

resist the ambitious designs of Russia. He declared to me that he even possessed full powers from his Government to enter into a Treaty offensive and defensive with the Porte, and that he had so informed the Sultan two months ago.

I had every reason to believe that Mohsin Khan's statement was not in accordance with fact, but I considered it my duty to telegraph it to your Lordship.

From inquiries which your Lordship has instituted at Tehran, it would seem that my suspicions were well founded.

I have further ascertained that Mohsin Khan, so far from wishing to bring about an understanding between Turkey and Persia, is seeking to create fresh differences between them. He is now about to raise anew the question as to the application of the most-favoured-nation clause in the Treaty between Turkey and Persia, claiming for Persians the advantage of the Capitulations entered into with European Powers, and to put forward some claims to an island which has been formed in the Shat-el-Arab, on the Persian side. I have the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum by Sir Arnold Kemball on these questions.

From what I have stated to your Lordship there seems good reason to suspect that Persia is desirous to profit by the war between Russia and Turkey, and that she is acting in accordance with, or at the instigation of, the former Power. Should such be the case, it is probable that she will make some attempt in the direction of Bagdad, and Safvet Pasha assures me that she is already making preparations with that object in the direction of Kermanshah,—a statement which Mohsin Khan positively denies.

Persia has long sought an opportunity to annex that part of the territory of Turkey which contains the shrines of the Shiah martyrs and saints. But her forces would be inadequate, if unsupported, to obtain any success in that quarter, should Her Majesty's Government think fit to prevent them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Since writing my despatch I have seen Safvet Pasha, who informs me that the Council has decided against either appealing to the Sheriff of Mecca or allowing a joint Turkish and Persian Commission to proceed to Medina. A Turkish Commissioner alone will be sent, but the Porte undertakes that the inquiry shall be full and impartial.

I communicated this decision to Mohsin Khan, who told me that he feared that his Government would be much dissatisfied with it.

A. H. L.

Inclosure in No. 204.

Memorandum.

THE thalweg of the Shat-el-Arab should no doubt be the boundary between the two countries from the point where the common frontier begins on the left bank of the river a few miles above the Huffar at Sheikh Jabric's fort down to the sea.

The matter in dispute will, of course be eventually determined on that basis, though it be not hitherto admitted by Turkey.

Meantime, as Mohsin Khan does not sufficiently particularise the locality to which he refers, Colonel Nixon might be instructed in correspondence with the Persian Consul-General at Baghdad to certify the facts, and if the Turks should be found to be transgressing the thalweg, the Porte might be invited to forbid Sheikh Nessar Pasha's proceedings, in order to maintain the *statu quo* (as formerly stipulated in a written agreement between the two States) pending the decision of the Commission.

Or it might be perhaps sufficient without a formal inquiry, which might lead to useless discussion, to advise the Porte to postpone its pretentions and abstain from any infringement of the *status quo*.

I cannot conceive a new small island near Djegiret el Khidhr, which, as being new, or newly formed, owing to some change in the river's course, could have been previously in the possession of Persia.

The other point on which Mohsin Khan has solicited the Ambassador's mediation, is the recognition of Persia's right to extra-territorial jurisdiction in Turkey, as enjoyed by other foreign Powers under the Capitulations.

Persia bases her pretension on this head as well on the Article of the Treaty of Erzeroom relating to the privileges of Consuls (the terms of which are disputable) as on

the most-favoured-nation clause of the same Treaty, and she desires the British Ambassador to advocate the interpretation of the same in the sense desired.

But, assuming acquiescence to be desirable (which, even for the interests of Persian subjects residing in Turkey, is more than doubtful) England could not consistently recommend to a foreign Power what she could not herself concede to that Power, namely, reciprocity of privileges in their nature abnormal and exceptional.

The argument of the most-favoured-nation clause in fact here cuts both ways.

Turkey does not under that clause exercise extra-territorial jurisdiction in British dominions, and she does not arrogate it to herself, nor does she desire to exercise it in Persia; on what ground then can England propose to her to concede to Persia what she (England) will not herself concede to that country or even reciprocally to Turkey.

Turkey, in short, repudiates the most-favoured-nation clause, as applicable to political and judicial privileges derived from special Capitulations, and restricts its application to purely Consular and commercial privileges.

No. 205.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 360.)
Constantinople, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copies of despatches from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Andrinople, respecting the effect produced in that town by the declaration of war, and the state of public security in the province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 205.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, April 26, 1877.

Sir,

THE announcement of the declaration of war in to-day's local papers, and that the Russians have commenced operations in Roumania and in Asia, seems to have cast a sudden gloom over the Turkish population in this city, so different from the feeling exhibited a few days before, when they appeared so anxious for hostilities to commence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 205.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, April 26, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, notwithstanding the large military force, as well as the Mustahfiz (reserves) now under arms in this province and in Adrianople, I have not heard of a single case of violence or disorder having been committed by them, and the country is remarkably quiet.

The only disturbers of the public tranquillity are the Circassians, who seem to constitute themselves into small bands and commit petty acts of oppression and pillage wherever they go, but the authorities have lately shown great promptness in sending in pursuit of these marauders and lodging them in prison as soon as intelligence is brought of their misdeeds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

No. 206.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 362.)
Constantinople, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk forwarding translation of a proclamation issued by the Roumanian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 206.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Rustchuk, April 28, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you translation of a Proclamation issued by the Roumanian Government on the 25th instant as published by the Prefect of Giurgevo.

The Sirdar Ekrem and Ahmed Eyoub Pasha are here, and troops are being daily brought down from Widdin.

Hobart Pasha returned to the fleet on the night of the 25th instant in his yacht "Rethymo."

Although this place is in a state of great activity from the movements of troops and other military preparations, still I have not as yet heard of any disorderly act.

The Russian Consul-General hauled down his flag and left this for Giurgevo, with all the personnel of the Consulate, the cavasses excepted, on Thursday 26th instant.

Many foreigners have already left, and others are leaving daily.

Since Colonel Lennox's telegram of yesterday there is nothing of further interest to report.

I have &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

P.S.—The Baron Dertyer has arrived here to take charge of the German and Russian Consulates.

R. R.

Inclosure 2 in No. 206.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

WE hasten to inform the public of the Proclamation issued by the Honourable Council of Ministers, received here at 6 o'clock this morning.

Giurgevo, April 13, 1877, o.s.

(Signed) Director BOLINTENMO.

At the Council of Ministers held on the morning of the 11th of April, the Government received from the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire an invitation to confer with the Commander-in-chief, his Excellency Abdul Kerim Pasha, with a view of protecting Wallachian territory from an invasion of Russian troops, which appears to be imminent. In the meanwhile, the Prefects on the borders of Russian Bessarabia have communicated to the Government that the Russian army has commenced operations by entering Roumania on three points, viz., Calalu, in the district of Bestinak, opposite Leva, where their vanguard has already arrived; Tabak, in the district of Bolgrad; and Ungheni, where the railway to Jassy commences. The vanguard has already reached Jassy.

In view of these two events, which have occurred before the assembling of the House, the Government could not and cannot do otherwise than follow the line of conduct indicated by the Chambers in the last Session, viz., to maintain the rights and neutrality of the country until the meeting of Parliament, which will take place on the 14th instant, when the country will be in a position to utter its last and decisive word. The Government, not being able to predict what that decision will be, took the following measures to preserve the public peace and tranquillity:—

1. To avoid any conflict which may force the nation to action before the meeting of Parliament, the Roumanian troops stationed on the frontiers have received orders to withdraw to the interior.

2. The Prefects on the boundaries are ordered, when requested by the Commanders of the troops that have entered and will enter, not to intervene as agents of the central authorities, but as simple officials of police, and semi-officially to keep the population from conflicts, at the same time leaving the municipal authorities to represent the districts occupied.

3. The population inhabiting the banks of the Danube are requested to withdraw, with their families and effects, to the interior.

(Signed) BRATIANO.
COGALNICEANO.
DOCAT.
QUITZ.
&c. &c.

No. 207.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 367.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report from Mr. Stoney, Agent of the Constantinople Bulgarian Relief Fund, and of a letter from Mr. Vice-Consul Wrench, with reference to the Bulgarian outrages. Your Lordship will observe that Mr. Stoney is of opinion that the number of those who perished did not much exceed 3,000. Such is also the belief of Lady Strangford, who is now here on her way to England, founded, her Ladyship states, upon the most careful inquiries that she has instituted almost from house to house. She attributes the great discrepancy between this estimate and that first made to the fact that very many persons who were supposed to have been killed had fled, or had concealed themselves in other towns and villages. They are now gradually returning to their homes, or are establishing themselves elsewhere. It is not improbable that some included amongst the victims may still be living, although it is not likely that this should be the case to any extent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received from Mr. Wrench a telegram which has reached him from Mr. Stoney, and of which a copy is now inclosed, stating that the number of killed amounts to 3,700.

A. H. L.

Inclosure 1 in No. 207.

Vice-Consul Wrench to Mr. Layard.

Constantinople, April 28, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to the observation made by your Excellency yesterday to the effect that I had not alluded in my letter to Mr. Jocelyn of the 20th instant to the Bulgarian insurrection, of which Otlukeui was the centre, I beg to state that I thought the information I received to be too meagre, and the explanations too trivial to be of interest. I had but one conversation with a notable of Otlukeui which turned on the subject of the revolt. On asking him whether the insurgent army of Otlukeui could have numbered 1,000 men, he replied that it consisted of, at least, 5,000, and had been collected not only from Otlukeui itself, a town of some 10,000 inhabitants, but from ten of the surrounding villages. I asked what this army had done, and he answered not much, for before it could act the soldiers of "our Padishah" arrived. He added that when the bugle was heard, and the Turkish flag seen, the joy was universal, and the whole town turned out to welcome the troops. I naturally inquired, "Against whom then did you rebel if it were not against your Sultan?" To this he answered that on looking back he too wondered, the heads of the people had been turned, they had acted like children. He admitted that the town enjoyed prosperity, and I everywhere saw signs of prosperity and commercial activity such as are seldom to be met with in the Turkish provinces.

He said they had no grievances against the authorities with the exception of the zaptiehs, against whose exactions and general conduct when on duty in the villages bitter complaints were made. I have every reason to believe that the conduct complained of was often arbitrary and brutal; but I suggested that it would have been better to have appealed to the superior provincial authorities, to Constantinople, if necessary to the Representatives of the European Powers, rather than at a childish attempt at revolt to bring upon themselves their ruin. He replied, "You are right, we see it now, the whole fault was ours; we have no one to blame but ourselves." He confessed that the rising was at the instigation of foreigners; he admitted that the Bulgarians were not brave enough to have taken up arms, that there were not half-a-dozen courageous men in the Otlukeui army, and that any six armed Bulgarians would always run from one Circassian, and he ended by saying that the people had been deceived by one Benkozky (mentioned in Mr. Baring's Report), who had stayed some time in the town, and had by threats induced the elders against their better judgment to incite the people to take up arms. I reproached my informant more than once with concealing the truth, so childish did his whole story appear to me; it appeared otherwise to one, at least, of his countrymen, for on my leaving the room he was blamed for letting me into the secrets of the revolt. Such was my conversation; but it will be more interesting for your Excellency to peruse remarks made by Mr. Stoney, who has been for months in the Philippopolis district, and I therefore take the liberty to inclose an extract from his journal now in my possession.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WRENCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 207.

Report of Mr. Stoney.

Sindjurli.—A village which contained before the revolt 176 houses, all of which were burned. Inhabitants say they fled from the village hearing that the Bashi-Bazouks were coming; but they took with them their families, herds, &c.—that nine men who did not leave were killed; that in the interval between their departure and the arrival of the Bashi-Bazouks the village was plundered by the Turks of Hissar and the Bulgarians of Kesselar (a mixed village half an hour's distance).

Other accounts say that the villagers leaving to join the army of Otlukkeui, took away all their belongings, and then set fire to their houses.

The villagers do not deny that they killed some of the Turks of Hairanlu in the early days of the revolt.

Hairanlu.—Turkish village two hours west of Sindjurli, and one hour east of Yenikeui (Novo Zelo), 100 families.

At the commencement of the revolt the people of Sindjurli caught twelve men of Hairanlu on the return from the market of Carlova and massacred them in the streets of Sindjurli, leaving their bodies for days exposed to the dogs.

Same day people of Novo Zelo killed six men of Hairanlu at a mill and carried off six others as prisoners, who were thrown into a church and eventually shot through the windows. Ten Zingaries of Hairanlu were also killed at same time by Novo Zelots.

Names of killed (thirty-four) and their widows on opposite page. Villagers of Hairanlu have hitherto supported their widows and children.

Youruk Mahallé.—A group of four Turkish villages in the mountains to the south of Buta. Two were completely destroyed and the other two partially, in the first advance of the insurgents from Otlukkeui. The inhabitants fled to Bazardjik. The bearing of the people of these villages contrasts strongly with that of the Bulgarians under similar circumstances. Some were reconstructing their houses unassisted, and all were at work. The story of their flight before the "great army of Otlukkeui," and their return to find their houses burned and their goods carried off was told simply and without exaggerational (*sic*) comments; when asked if they had many widows, and orphans, and poor, the answer was invariably, "Yes; but Allah is good, we will get over it; those who have, give to those who have not. Inshallah."

The Bulgarians sit down in sullen indifference, and will not lend a hand to help in the construction of their own houses. Ask who are the poor, and every man, woman, and child stretches out both hands for alms, "We are all poor," they cry. Surely, they have not learned this practice since the insurrection; they are not such apt scholars. It is a significant fact, however, that in the reconstruction of their villages one of the first houses built is turned into a wine shop.

Ouroushlu Mahallé (Yourouk Mahallé), village of fifty-two houses, twenty-seven of which were burned. Three men of this villages were killed by the Bulgarians; their widows are poor.

Douani Mahallé (Yourouk Mahallé).—Village of forty houses, of which five were burned. The hill which commands this village was occupied by the insurgent army of Otlukkeui for several days. The intention was to march on Bazardjik; but learning that the Turkish troops were advancing to meet them, the insurgents turned tail, and retreated to their quarters at Otlukkeui. Whilst encamped on the hill they repeatedly fired on the village of Douani.

Oktchouli Mahallé (Yourouk Mahallé).—Three men were killed. Village had fifty-two houses; fifty were burned.

Jaffirli Mahallé (Yourouk Mahallé).—Village contained twenty-seven houses; all burned. Three men were killed.

N.B.—The men killed belonging to these four villages were, generally speaking, shepherds or "bektchis" on the borders of the village grounds.

Bratzieva.—Village of 480 houses, of which ten were burned. During the insurrection the inhabitants of six neighbouring villages took shelter here.

Village was surrounded by Bashi-Bazouks for twelve days, during which firing was kept up on both sides, and the villagers were able to keep the Bashi-Bazouks at bay until the regular troops, under Hassan Pasha, arrived, when they were told that if they gave up their arms the town would be spared, provided there were no Russians or Servians amongst them. Terms agreed to, and Hassan Pasha took the town under his protection. At this moment Hafiz Pasha, with two battalions, who wished to burn the town, and had high words with Hassan Pasha on the subject; but the latter was firm, declaring that the Padishah had need of such fair and fruitful spots (it was then the height of the rose season), and that it should not be destroyed. Next morning, on the departure of the troops, some Bashi-Bazouks stole in and set fire to some ten houses, which were burned. Villagers ran after Hassan Pasha, and told him how his orders were being obeyed. He returned, extinguished the flames, and remained on the spot until all the Bashi-Bazouks were clear away.

Karlova.—A large town at the foot of the great Balkan, with a mixed population of Turks, Zingaries, Bulgarians, and Greeks, with a sprinkling of Jews.

The town was not attacked, but was in imminent danger, and was saved by the firmness and exertions of Hassan Effendi, who had just been despatched from Adrianople as Mudir. It is said that had he arrived one week earlier, Clissura might have been saved. The people of Sopot (the other town in his Mudirlik) speak in the same terms of him.

Peshtera (or Peristeri), a large and important town on the Batak River, which is here called the Peshtera Tchaï. Has 600 houses, Bulgarian; 300, Turk.

"The entire community live happily together" (say the Bulgarian Tchorbadji and the Turkish Mouktar, Hadji Mehemed). The Bashi-Bazouks to the number of 1,000 were quartered on the town for twenty days by an order from Bazardjik. They "eat up the town."

Seven men were killed, two of them at Batak. The Bashi-Bazouks were only prevented firing the Bulgarian quarter by the remonstrances, and even threats, of the Turks.

Inclosure 3 in No. 207.

Vice-Consul Wrench to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Extract.) *April* 20, 1877.

THERE are one or two facts I learned in the course of my trip which might be considered interesting. The Mudir of Otlouk-keui is on excellent terms with the people he governs, and he told me, in the presence of a dozen of them without contradiction then or subsequently, that the real number of houses burned did not exceed 180, but that the number formerly given of 400 and odd included shops (on the ground floor of the houses) and out-houses of every description; the number of people of the town killed amounted to 570. There are upwards of 25 drinking-shops in the place. At Batak I learned from the Kaïmakam of Bazardjik 12 drinking-shops have been opened since the massacre there! And although the Kaïmakam had had them shut up he was informed by Mr. Stoney, who accompanied me, that he had met, three weeks previously, a quantity of horses laden with wine barrels (full) going to Batak, and had learned there that every grocer's store sold wine in the back part of the premises.

The Mudir of Otlouk-keui bitterly complained, as did the Kaïmakam of Buzardjik, of the want of police, especially mounted police, and when I dined with Ali Pasha at Adrianople a day or two later he promised he would do all he could to supply the want. A regiment of regular cavalry dispersed in groups of three to ten men over the Vilayet of Adrianople would be the best way of preventing every kind of disorder.

I may add that I thought I perceived among the upper classes of the Bulgarians a sort of restlessness as if they still expected some indefinite change. I made inquiries among my friends, some smiled at the idea, others went so far as to declare that hidden depôts of arms exist available for future movement in the event of a Russian advance. I can offer no opinion whatever on this point beyond stating that I was informed by a credible person that Bulgarian villagers who had not suffered had regretted having remained quiet, and thus allowed themselves to be shut out from the relief given by our Committee by Lady Strangford, and by Mr. Long.

I will now conclude by saying that in the three villages I visited, and in the town of Otlouk-keui, I did not hear so many complaints against the Turks as I did against the Bulgarian "Tchorbadjis" (heads of the villages). Mr. Stoney has been making very careful returns of the killed in recent events all over the Philippopolis district (in order to systematize the relief he dispenses). I have suggested to him to forward to the Embassy, through the Vice-Consul at Philippopolis, the results of his investigations. His returns are nearly completed, and will be certainly the most carefully accurate of any yet given. I think I am not mistaken in saying that the total number of killed will be found not to exceed 5,000 persons.

Inclosure 4 in No. 207.

Vice-Consul Wrench to Mr. Foster.

(Extract.) *April* 18, 1877.

YOUR letter of the 11th only reached me last night on my return from a week's holiday, during which I visited Adrianople, Philippopolis, Bazardjik, Otlukeui, &c., my answer, therefore, although late, will be to the point. I must begin by saying that our agents have not lately mentioned cases of outrages, and will now give in a few words the general result of my own observations. In short, I came to the conclusion that in the Adrianople Vilayet crime is not now more frequent than in ordinary years. This opinion is shared by Ali Pasha, the Vali, by the Kaïmakam of Bazardjik, by the Mudir of Otlukeui. Looking at the extent of the vilayet, at the mixture of Osmanlis, Bulgarians, Greeks, Pomaks, Circassians, &c., at the insufficient police force, at the natural excitement caused by recent events, and by the present political position, and lastly at the passage through the country of the Mestafiz or reserve. I was perfectly astonished that no "atrocities" had been lately committed and that there was no more crime than occurs in ordinary times in places where there is an absence of authority.

To give an instance of the lack of police, the Mudir of Otlukeui with a large, and populous district, and a town of 10,000 inhabitants to protect from the swift-handed depredations of the neighbouring Circassians, has at his command eight unmounted policemen, and yet, with the exception of three horses stolen, I heard of no complaints; it is true the Mudir had taken to shut up on Sundays and feast days the numerous drinking shops. The Mudir and the inhabitants joined in begging me to represent to the Vali (which I did not fail to do) the desirability of placing some half-a-dozen horsemen at the disposal of the Governor.

During my travels I heard of two Bulgarians being murdered not far from Hasskeui by Turks (I believe about a disputed debt) and a priest, said to have been drunk, a probable state during the Eastern holidays, was struck over the head with a yataghan by a Mussulman.

The authorities were actively investigating these cases, but as the facts of neither of them have been yet thoroughly sifted, I will not pretend to explain them. These, with the affair of the three horses stolen, were the only crimes I heard of as having happened within the previous ten days or a fortnight.

Inclosure 5 in No. 207.

Mr. Stoney to Vice-Consul Wrench.

(Telegraphic.) *Philippopolis, April* 28, 1877.

IN 54 villages 3,700 killed; given list of killed to Calvert; send details to-morrow.

No. 208.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 368.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 30, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the communication which the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin has been ordered by his Government to address to that of Germany with regard to the protectorate of Russian subjects in Turkey during the war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 208.

Telegram addressed to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, April 29, 1877.

AU moment de quitter Constantinople le Chargé d'Affaires de Russie avait annoncé à la Sublime Porte qu'il laisserait les sujets Russes, pendant la rupture, sous la protection de l'Ambassade et des Consuls d'Allemagne sauf pour certaines provinces où les sujets Russes seraient placés sous la protection de la France, de l'Italie, et de l'Autriche. Sa déclaration de la guerre suivit de bien près la rupture de relations diplomatiques. Mais vos télégrammes, ainsi que les communications du Chargé d'Affaires d'Allemagne, ayant fait connaître au Gouvernement Impérial que le Cabinet de Berlin offrait de prendre sous sa protection les sujets Russes, même pendant la durée de la guerre, la Sublime Porte a accueilli la pensée du Cabinet de Berlin avec toute la haute déférence qu'il s'est toujours fait un devoir de témoigner aux dispositions qui lui sont exprimées de la part de cette grande Puissance amie. Aussi s'il fût agi de laisser les sujets Russes sous une protection étrangère la Sublime Porte serait-elle on ne peut plus heureuse de mettre à profit la pensée du Gouvernement Allemand et d'épargner ainsi les difficultés que la situation actuelle lui crée vis-à-vis des sujets Russes.

Toutefois vous n'ignorez pas que les Capitulations assurent chez nous aux étrangers un régime de faveur tellement exceptionnel que ce régime devient impossible à concilier avec les exigences de l'état de guerre. Pendant que nos provinces sont exposées à une invasion hostile et que tout l'Empire est menacé, il nû été difficile de conserver aux sujets de la Puissance belligérante résidant en Turquie le bénéfice d'immunités qui non seulement leur ménagerait une position privilégiée vis-à-vis de nos propres sujets, mais, qui plus est, les placerait hors de l'atteinte de l'autorité territoriale. Dans telles circonstances cette protection exceptionnelle des sujets de la Puissance ennemie pourrait même susciter de graves embarras entre nos autorités et les autorités Consulaires Allemands et troubler ainsi les rapports au maintien desquels nous attachons le plus grand prix. Cette crainte est d'autant plus vive chez nous que la pluspart des individus dont il s'agit ne sont pas Russes d'origines, mais qu'ils appartiennent au pays. Originairement sujets Ottomans parfaitement au courant de notre situation intérieure, ils n'ont pris la nationalité Russe qu'à la suite des différends qu'ils ont eus avec les autorités Ottomanes, et bon nombre entre eux se trouvent encore vis-à-vis de leurs autorités d'origine dans des rapports aussi délicats que complexes. Ces mêmes considérations ont fait qu'à l'époque de la guerre de Crimée, lorsque le danger était pourtant bien moindre, quand les sujets Russes ont dû quitter le territoire en vertu d'un ancien Traité avec la Russie, et leur avait été accordé un délai de six mois. Mais si le Traité en question n'est plus en vigueur aujourd'hui et si le délai de six mois n'est plus obligatoire, il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'aujourd'hui aussi les régimes des Capitulations a rendu indispensable pour la sécurité intérieure l'éloignement des sujets Russes dans un bref délai déterminé. C'est en vous appuyant sur ces raisons que vous vous attacherez à convaincre son Excellence M. de Bülow du très vif regret que la Sublime Porte éprouvera en se trouvant bien malgré elle, reduite par la force des choses à se priver des avantages qu'elle aurait pu autrement

recueillir en plaçant les sujets Russes sous la protection Allemande et en épargnant à ses propres sujets des pertes peut-être inévitables. Son Excellence est assurément trop juste, trop éclairée, pour ne pas faire à nos excuses l'accueil que nous attendons de sa haute équité, et pour ne pas sentir combien nous devons regretter de ne pas pouvoir donner à nos déterminations une direction plus conforme à nos désirs.

Dans tous les cas vous vous appliquerez à ne laisser place dans l'esprit de son Excellence à aucune interprétation qui serait irréconciliable, je le répète, avec la haute déférence que nous accordons toujours aux conseils et aux communications dont le Cabinet de Berlin veut bien nous faire part.

No. 209.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 369.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 30, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information, copy of a Circular note from the Sublime Porte inclosing official notice as to navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles during the night until the re-establishment of peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 209.

Safvet Pasha to Mr. Layard.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le* 28 *Avril,* 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-jointe, copie d'un avis officiel concernant les mesures qui doivent être strictement observées dans les détroits des Dardanelles et du Bosphore jusqu'au rétablissement de la paix.

Je prie votre Excellence de vouloir bien porter cet avis à la connaissance des navigateurs Anglais et de vouloir agréer, etc.

(Signé) SAFVET.

Inclosure 2 in No. 209.

Circular as to Navigation of Bosphorus and Dardanelles during War.

VU l'état de guerre le Gouvernement Impérial a arrêté les mesures suivantes qui seront strictement observées à partir du 29 Avril, 1877, jusqu'au rétablissement de la paix.

1. Le passage des détroits des Dardanelles et du Bosphore soit à l'entrée, soit à la sortie, est interdit à tous navires à voile ou à vapeur, indistinctement et sans exception, durant la nuit, c'est à dire, avant le lever et après le coucher du soleil.

2. Les phares établis dans les détroits, à l'exception des deux grands phares situés à l'entrée du Bosphore du côté de la Mer Noire (Rouméli et Anadolu Feneri), et les deux phares de Sedul Bahr et de Koum Kalé du détroit des Dardanelles, demeureront éteints.

Ces quatre phares pourront eux-mêmes être éteints sur l'ordre des commandants militaires.

3. L'usage de tirer des coups de canon dans les temps brumeux à titre de signal d'alarme est absolument supprimé.

No. 210.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 370.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 30, 1877.

I RECEIVED to-day a deputation from the Turkish House of Commons composed of Mussulmans and Christians, amongst the former the member for Jerusalem, and a

Dervisch and descendant of the prophet, member for Konia (the ancient Iconium). They had requested me to see them as they wished to congratulate me on my arrival here, and to express their gratitude to Her Majesty's Government for sending an Ambassador to Turkey in the present critical state of affairs. I had an extremely interesting conversation with them, three of them speaking French, and the member for Jerusalem, English. I was a good deal struck by their intelligence and by the free and independent manner in which they expressed their opinions. They spent nearly two hours with me, discussing various details of our Constitutional system, and our Parliamentary proceedings and regulations, the Turkish budget, &c.

They condemned the administration of affairs and especially of the finances, as strongly as the most ardent economist in our House of Commons. They declared their intention of submitting the Budget to the scrutiny of the "sections," and of calling upon the Government for the fullest explanations with regard to it.

I endeavoured to ascertain whether the statements that had been made to me of the good feeling between the Mussulman and the Christian members of the Chamber, and their unanimity in supporting the Government in the war against Russia, were well-founded.

One of the Christian delegates, speaking in the name of his Christian colleagues, assured me emphatically that they were, and that there was a conviction amongst the Christian communities of all sects that they could enjoy much greater religious freedom, and that they had a far better prospect of future prosperity and independence, under the Turkish than under the Russian rule. At the same time he condemned, in no measured terms, the bad and corrupt administration of the country, and the want of protection to life and property.

The Mussulman deputies expressed entire concurrence in his remarks, and assured me that times had now greatly changed, and that all they wished was to live in peace and on perfect equality with their Christian fellow subjects.

It was somewhat strange to hear these sentiments from a Dervisch, wearing the green turban of a "Seyyid." It is not impossible that the members of the deputation desired, for obvious reasons, to make a favourable impression upon me; but I must confess that, on the whole, they appeared to me to be sincere in what they said. They ended by presenting an address to me, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation.

Before coming to Constantinople, I was inclined to attach little importance to the attempt to give a Constitution and a Parliament to Turkey. I have not yet, of course, had time to study the question thoroughly, but from what I have already heard and seen I am disposed to think that they might lead to results very favourable to the various populations of the Empire.

To expect that they will work at once and produce immediate results would be to expect too much. But the fact that men from all parts of Turkey can, in public assembly, express their opinions, describe the condition of their respective provinces, and boldly demand reforms in the administration, is a very great step gained, and promises very important and useful changes. I asked the Deputies whether they were under any restraint in saying what they thought. They answered that they were not; that their President, Ahmet Vefyk Pasha, had at first endeavoured to interfere too much in their discussions, but that he no longer did so, as he found that the Chamber was in favour of free discussion, and might be fully trusted with it. Several persons who are in the habit of being present at the debates of the House assure me that they are carried on with remarkable ability and dignity, and that most of the Deputies show independence and courage.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 210.

Address.

(Translation.)

'THE appointment to the Embassy at Constantinople of a well-wisher to our country like your Excellency with the view of strengthening the bonds of friendship which existed, *ab antiquo*, with perfect reciprocity between the great and glorious British nation and the Ottoman people, being a subject of great joy and elation to the latter, the Undersigned have been delegated by the Chamber of Representatives to make known this national feeling to your Excellency, and whilst welcoming you to their country as they are bound

to do, they beg the favour of your Excellency's conveying to the glorious English people the permanence of the friendly feelings of this country towards them.

May God grant us success.

April 15, 1877.

(Signed) HUSSEIN, *Member for Koniah.*
IBRAHIM FEHIM, *Member for Bosnia.*
ALI NAKI, *Member for Janina.*
DINUTRAKI, *Member for the Danube.*
SEBUH, *Member for the Capital.*
YOUSSOUF ZIA, *Member for Jerusalem.*

No. 211.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 374.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 1, 1877.

AT an interview yesterday with Safvet Pasha I again spoke to his Excellency, in very earnest language, about the Bulgarian Christians still retained in prison at Adrianople, Philippopolis, and Tatar Bazardjik. I reminded him that he had given me the distinct assurance that their amnesty had been accorded, and that they would be immediately released. I pointed out to him in strong terms the absolute necessity of satisfying public opinion in Europe by this act of justice.

His Excellency replied that the decree of amnesty had been prepared and only required the Sultan's official sanction, and that the imprisoned Bulgarians would be very shortly set at liberty.

I placed in his Excellency's hands a list of some of those still kept in prison which had been furnished to me by Lady Strangford; and I have taken steps to let the Sultan know how important it is, on every account, that they should be released as soon as possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 212.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 116. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April* 28, 1877.

PRINCE NICHOLAS having expressed a wish that I should, if possible, go to Scutari and see the Turkish Commander-in-chief upon the subject of the grain and provision transports, I telegraphed on the 23rd instant for your Lordship's permission to do so. But being unable to avail myself of the authorization communicated to me through Sir Andrew Buchanan, I requested Mr. Bland, who had charge of a bag of despatches for Mr. Consul Green, to endeavour to persuade the Turkish authorities that there was no danger to be apprehended in the passage of their last provision train to Nichsich over Montenegrin soil, nor any reason for hesitation in carrying out the stipulations of the Convention relative to the forwarding of the grain to Rieka.

Mr. Bland went to Scutari on the 25th instant, and from his report of the interview which he had with Ali Saib Pasha, and with Azarian Effendi, who negotiated the Convention, I apprehend that every endeavour will be made to find some pretext for declining to forward the Montenegrin grain, in the hope that an advance from the Herzegovina will shortly relieve Nichsich, and render unnecessary any further steps to complete the provisioning of the town, which has received all but some 10,000 okes of the stipulated supplies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 213.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 117. Political.) *Cettigné, April 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

PRINCE NICHOLAS read to me yesterday a telegram which he had received from the Emperor of Russia on the 25th instant, informing him that His Imperial Majesty was sending, by Colonel Bogolaboff, the third class of the Order of St. George for His Highness, and four decorations of the fourth class of the same Order for four of his Chiefs.

In honour of this event, Cettigné was illuminated on the 25th instant, and on the 26th a dinner was given at the Palace to the Russian Agent and Consul-General Jonine, and to all the Russian Colony, at which the health of the Czar and the success of the Russian arms were proposed by Prince Nicholas, and enthusiastically acclaimed by the assembled guests.

My Austrian colleague and I gave private intimation that we did not wish to be invited to this demonstration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 214.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 118. Political.) *Cettigné, April 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday respecting the decapitation of a Kutchi by the Turks on the previous day, I have to report that Prince Nicholas spoke to me very warmly on the subject in an interview which I had with His Highness yesterday morning, and said that he would certainly retaliate in the severest manner if the Turks continued to perpetrate such barbarities.

In my presence His Highness gave orders to his Secretary to forward, in the name of M. Bojo Petrovich, a telegram to Ali Sahib Pasha to the above effect. And he declared to me that he was determined to carry out his threat by hanging every Turkish officer above the rank of captain whom the fortune of war might throw into his hands, unless the enemy refrained from the commission of such barbarities as that which had just occurred.

The Prince was anxious that I should bring the occurrence and the determination to which he had come in consequence at once to your Lordship's knowledge; and that I should telegraph to Mr. Consul Green the hope in which His Highness indulged, that the Commander-in-Chief would cause the decapitated man's head to be at once restored to his family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 215.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 119. Political.) *Cettigné, April 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

PRINCE NICHOLAS intends to start to-morrow for Danilograd, not to return, for some time at any rate, to Cettigné.

Under these circumstances I telegraphed again to your Lordship yesterday to state that I hoped that I might be authorized to leave at once for Vienna in company with Mr. Bland.

I cannot now, however, receive an answer from your Lordship in time for me to do so, and I therefore intrust Mr. Bland with this and the accompanying despatches to be conveyed under flying seal to Vienna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 216.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 120. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April 29, 1877.*

PRINCE NICHOLAS has issued a Proclamation to his people announcing the entry of Russia into hostilities with Turkey, and the consequent recommencement of the war on the part of Montenegro. His Highness alludes to the recent negotiations at Constantinople, and the failure to obtain the satisfaction of his legitimate aspirations, and adverts to the favourable prospects for the Slav cause created by the participation of Russia in the conflict with Turkey, in which the Montenegrins have already so gloriously distinguished themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 217.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 121. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April 29, 1877.*

PRINCE NICHOLAS started this morning at 8 o'clock for Danilograd.

His Highness has news that the Turks have 20,000 men at Gatzko, and is apprehensive of their attempting to advance upon Niehsich by the Douga Pass, to prevent which movement he has already sent reinforcements to the Voivode Vukotich.

The occupation of Niehsich by a large Turkish force would make a simultaneous invasion of the Principality on the north and south very much more easy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 218.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 122. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April 29, 1877.*

AFTER Prince Nicholas' departure this morning, I received from His Highness a letter, of which the inclosed is a copy, and in which he is pleased to express his satisfaction at the manner in which I have acted as the channel of communication between Montenegro and Her Majesty's Government.

There is also a suggestion as to the future relations between England and the Principality, which your Lordship will not fail to notice.

I inclose a copy of my reply to the Prince, in which I have thought it right to record my sense of the cordiality and confidence with which he has always treated me, but I have, of course, refrained from alluding to the question of the eventual appointment of an accredited English Agent here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 218.

Prince Nicholas to Mr. Monson.

Monsieur, *Cettigné, le $\frac{16}{28}$ Avril, 1877.*

AU moment de nous séparer, momentanément je l'espère, moi pour réjoindre mes troupes, vous pour la destination que votre Gouvernement vous désigne, je tiens à vous exprimer, plus clairement que je n'ai eu le temps de le faire, quel plaisir j'ai eu à faire votre connaissance, et à vous avoir auprès de moi pendant plusieurs mois. Je tiens aussi à vous dire combien je vous suis obligé pour la manière dont vous avez étudié et compris notre pays si mal connu. Vous vous êtes admirablement rendu compte de sa situation

difficile, de ses besoins, et de ses aspirations légitimes; et les rapports que votre Gouvernement a publiés méritent ma gratitude, pour la justice que vous avez rendue à mon caractère et à la droiture de mes intentions. Je ne peux douter que vos représentations aient produit l'impression à laquelle vous deviez vous attendre, et j'aime à croire que, de retour dans votre pays, vous pouvez continuer à rendre témoignage à la vérité en ce qui nous concerne.

Je regrette vivement que les rapports personnels qui m'ont été si agréables doivent prendre une fin; et je serais réellement heureux que votre Gouvernement vous chargeât d'une nouvelle mission auprès de moi, et surtout qu'il vous choisît pour son représentant régulier quand il se décidera à en accréditer un auprès de moi.

Dans cette espérance, je vous prie, &c.,

(Signé) P^ce. NICOLAS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 218.

Mr. Monson to Prince Nicholas.

Monseigneur, *Cettigné, le 29 Avril*, 1877.

LA note que votre Altesse m'a fait l'honneur de m'adresser en date d'hier, et par laquelle elle a bien voulu m'exprimer son appréciation de la manière de laquelle j'ai tâché de remplir les devoirs dont mon Gouvernement m'a chargé auprès de votre Altesse, m'a causé la plus vive satisfaction.

Ce fût pour moi un véritable plaisir d'être choisi par le Gouvernement de la Reine pour la mission importante et responsable qui a duré maintenant pendant plus de six mois; et qui m'a été rendue, dès le commencement, relativement facile par l'accueil gracieux et confiant dont je fus l'objet de la part de votre Altesse.

La confidence que votre Altesse m'a invariablement témoignée a aplani bien des difficultés qui eûssent pu entraver l'exécution de mes fonctions d'intermédiaire entre le Gouvernement de votre Altesse et celui de mon pays. Aussi, si j'ai pu réussir à me rendre utile à tous les deux, c'est grâce aux soins que votre Altesse a toujours eus de me tenir au courant, non seulement des événements qui ont influencé sa conduite, mais des idées générales qui ont inspiré sa politique, dans les circonstances critiques du passé.

Je crois pouvoir constater que le Gouvernement de la Reine s'est bien rendu compte des difficultés qui ont entouré votre Altesse dans les dernières négociations. Quant à moi, personnellement, je n'ai éprouvé que le simple désir de pouvoir contribuer, selon mes moyens, au dénouement pacifique que votre Altesse avait à cœur, et à l'établissement d'une entente durable qui eût pu favoriser le développement paisible de la Principauté, au bien-être de laquelle je me suis si vivement intéressé.

Pénétré de sentiments de dévouement pour votre Altesse, pour la Princesse, et pour toute la famille Princière, je prie, &c.,

(Signé) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 219.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 417.)

My Lord, *Vienna, May 5*, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 369 of the 25th ultimo, reporting the text of a question addressed to the Government by Dr. Giskra in his own name, and that of forty-one members of the Chamber of Deputies, respecting the war now existing between Russia and Turkey, I yesterday acquainted your Lordship by telegraph with the answer which has been given to it, and I have now the honour to transmit herewith an extract, accompanied by a translation by Mr. Charlton from the "Gazette" of this morning, reporting the statement made to the Chamber of Deputies on this subject, on the part of the Government by M. de Lasser, the Minister of the Interior.

I also learn by telegrams from Pesth published by the Vienna newspapers, that a similar statement was made yesterday by M. de Tisza in the Hungarian Parliament.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Reply of the Minister of the Interior to Dr. Giskra's question respecting the War between Russia and Turkey.

(Translation.)

IS the Government in a position to inform the House as to the course proposed to be adopted by the Monarchy in consequence of the outbreak and development of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, and if so, what objects has the Government in view, and what measures does it contemplate for their attainment?

M. de Lasser, Minister of the Interior.—In the name of the Government I beg to make the following reply to the questions just put to me:—

The Monarchy will continue, during the war between Russia and Turkey, to retain the attitude which it has adopted and maintained since the commencement of the Eastern difficulties. Its exertions to bring about a practical amelioration of the condition of the Christian in the East are well known and universally acknowledged. At the same time, the efforts hitherto made for the maintenance of peace which have proved futile will be directed towards a localization of the war.

Since the efforts of the Powers to prevent the outbreak of war between Russia and Turkey have failed, the Imperial and Royal Government considers its duty to be twofold.

1. To do everything to prevent the war leading to European complications.

2. With reference to the results of the war and its eventual effect on the state of affairs in the East, to bring, under all circumstances, such influence to bear as the situation and the interests of the Monarchy may demand.

In order to protect these interests the Imperial and Royal Government, notwithstanding the proclamation of neutrality, reserves to itself a right of freedom of action.

Thus far the Government has been able to follow the course of affairs in the East without military precautions, and it will remain steadfast to the principle of not burdening the State with unnecessary mobilization, and, as yet, sees no ground for military preparations.

On the other hand, the Government is quite aware that no Power has more vital and important interests to protect in the East of Europe than Austria-Hungary. It is, moreover, fully alive to these responsibilities.

The Government views present events with a confidence which is inspired by the decidedly friendly relations of the country with other Powers, by the frankness with which it has opportunely expressed that policy, and finally, by the evidence which His Majesty the Emperor has, that he can count on the support of his people and on the patriotism of their leaders whenever the interests of the Monarchy are to be preserved.

Embued with this confidence as well as with the feeling of strength which it gathers from the possession of an army-power successfully developed through the foresight of Parliaments, the Government is in a position under the present circumstances, to give the necessary effect to the voice of Austria-Hungary without resort to military measures (applause).

No. 220.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 418.)

My Lord, *Vienna, May 5*, 1877.

WITH reference to my No. 414 of the 3rd instant, relative to assurances received by Colonel Mansfield from the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs as to the policy of the Principality, I have now the honour to inclose the copy of a telegram on this subject, communicated by the Roumanian Agent to Count Andrassy on the 30th ultimo, and the copy of a second telegram on the same subject from M. Cogalniceano, dated the 3rd of May, which M. de Balatchano has also been good enough to communicate to me.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 220.

M. Cogalniceano to M. de Balatchano.

(Télégraphique.) *Bucarest, le 29 Avril*, 1877.

JE vous ai prévenu que, privés de l'appui des Puissances Garantes et en présence de l'entrée imminente de l'armée Russe, nous devions puiser en nous-mêmes la force morale nécessaire pour faire face aux périls de la situation. Nous avons dû nous entendre avec le Gouvernement Impérial Russe afin de sauvegarder notre individualité politique, nos institutions et nos frontières, telles qu'elles nous avaient été garanties par le Traité de Paris. Nous avons dû nous préoccuper, en même temps, de règlementer les transports, les réquisitions, les cantonnements, en un mot, tous les rapports des troupes Russes avec nos autorités et nos populations. Toutes ces questions ont été réglées par deux Conventions rédigées le $\frac{4}{16}$ Avril et soumises hier à l'approbation du Parlement. La Chambre des Députés, dans une séance de nuit, les a approuvées par 79 voix contre 25. Elles seront discutées aujourd'hui au Sénat.

Ces Conventions n'ont d'autre caractère politique que celui de nous garantir le *statu quo* pendant la durée de la guerre. Il n'y est question ni d'indépendance, ni de la résiliation d'aucun de nos liens actuels avec la Turquie. Pas de co-opération de notre armée avec l'armée Russe; pas d'alliance contre la Turquie.

Inclosure 2 in No. 220.

M. Cogalniceano to M. de Balatchano.

(Télégraphique.) *Bucarest, le 3 Mai*, 1877.

VOUS êtes autorisé à démentir les assertions du "Journal des Débats," et de quelques journaux Austro-Hongrois, qui nous accusent de n'avoir pas été sincères à l'occasion des Conventions avec la Russie. Il avait été convenu que ces Conventions seraient présentées à nos Chambres, et qu'elles n'auraient d'effet qu'en cas de déclaration de guerre. Le Gouvernement Roumain pouvait donc les considérer comme n'existant pas, avant l'entrée des troupes Russes en Roumanie. Nous n'avons conclu ces Conventions que lorsque nous nous sommes vus abandonnés par les Puissances, et lorsque l'Europe s'est dégagée des obligations qu'elle avait contractées par le Traité de Paris, en abandonnant la Turquie à ses propres forces, et en plaçant la Roumanie entre deux armées prêtes à en venir aux mains, sur son propre territoire. Dans cette conjoncture, notre pays a dû chercher à se faire garantir le respect de son Gouvernement de ses frontières, de ses droits et de ses intérêts. Il n'a pas été au-delà. Il n'est pas exact qu'en vertu des Conventions nos autorités doivent être remplacées par des autorités Russes, et que nous ayons accordé à la Russie le droit de substituer son système de rails au nôtre. Il n'est pas exact que notre armée soit appelée à co-opérer avec les armées Russes; elle a été mobilisée pour défendre nos frontières contre l'invasion des Tcherkess et des Bachi-Bouzouks qui ravagent aujourd'hui les villes situées sur la rive droite du Danube.

Je vous prie donc d'affirmer hautement que nous n'avons trompé personne. Si l'Europe avait eu une autre attitude, la Roumanie eût été plus ferme dans sa politique; mais elle a été condamnée à ne prendre conseil que de la terrible situation que lui ont créée des événements indépendants de sa volonté.

No. 221.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 421.)

My Lord, *Vienna, May 5*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I communicated to-day to Baron Orczy the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, instructing me to inform the Government of Austria-Hungary, that as soon as Her Majesty's Government are made acquainted with the terms of the notes addressed by Count Andrassy to the Governments of Russia and Turkey, relative to the free navigation of the Danube, they will readily make similar representations on the subject.

Baron Orczy, in stating that he would submit my communication to Count Andrassy, said that the notes were only despatched yesterday, and that Count Andrassy may possibly

wish to give them time to arrive at their respective destinations before communicating them to other Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 222.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 2. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, April 27*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the substance of a cyphered telegram which I have to-day forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador.

I beg to add that the attitude of the Turkish population at Adrianople is one of marked calmness united with a firm determination to lay down their lives and fortunes in the cause of their country.

Some apprehensions are expressed by the Christian communities of an outbreak of the Mahommedans in the villages on this side of the Balkans, should the Turkish arms meet with serious reverses on the Danube. I have been unable as yet to form an opinion as to whether those apprehensions are well founded or otherwise.

The Greek Archbishop is making a tour in his diocese with the view to the preservation of strict order and tranquillity among his flock. Public prayers have been offered up both in the Greek and Armenian Churches for the success of the Ottoman arms. More substantial evidence of sympathy with the Turkish cause has been furnished in the shape of 1,700 Turkish pounds, collected for the uniforms of the Mustahfiz, a large proportion of which sum was contributed by native and foreign Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 222.

Substance of Telegram from Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, April 27, 1877.

ARRIVED here last night. Vice-Consul reports that the troops are well behaved. Two Christians were murdered on the 24th instant, it is supposed by Circassians, who appear to be becoming more troublesome. Vice-Consul is going to investigate the case to-morrow on the spot.

Large quantities of grain have been and continue to be exported from this and Philippopoli to Europe.

No. 223.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord, *Tunis, April 30*, 1877.

IT is with satisfaction I have the honour to report that, notwithstanding the intelligence which has reached Tunis that hostilities had commenced between Russia and Turkey, the Mahommedan population, though much excited, is perfectly tranquil; and it is hoped that it will maintain its present peaceable disposition.

The Government, on its side, has taken the necessary measures to preserve order and tranquillity at the suggestion of the foreign Representatives, particularly that of Italy, who, in contradicting a newspaper report that 20,000 troops were being assembled at Naples destined for Tunis, affirms to have stated to General Khaïreddin that, although there was no foundation for the report, yet he could not say what steps his Government might feel disposed to take in the event of any disorders occurring—an unfortunate expression, susceptible of misinterpretation when applied to Tunis by the Italian Agent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 224.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 64. Political. Very Confidential.)

Bucharest, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HEREWITH have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a translation of the Conventions signed between Baron Stuart and M. Cogalniceano.

The history of the Conventions is ultimately bound up with what has been going on in these Principalities during the last fortnight, and with the alleged views and outspoken declarations of the Government.

M. Cogalniceano took office as Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 15th instant, and the Convention is dated the 16th.

The inclosed is a long and carefully-worded State paper, and could not have been drawn up at a moment's notice; it therefore logically follows that when the Minister took office he found it in an advanced state of progress, if not quite ready; the latter must, indeed, have been the case, as the Conventions had, of course, received the sanction of the Russian Government and military authorities.

The Conventions, therefore, profess to have been signed exactly at the moment when M. Cogalniceano was putting the telegraph wires in movement, and through the Roumanian Agents was shrieking in the various capitals of Europe for the Guaranteeing Powers not to abandon Roumania, to interfere to procure the "neutralization of Kalafat," to engage the Porte not to ravage their territory, &c. &c., inferring, and perhaps maintaining, that they held to their position under the Treaties; while, on the 20th, M. Cogalniceano held to me the desponding language which I had the honour to report to your Lordship, language little consistent with a ratified engagement with Russia.

The only excuse for all this exhibition in respect of the Guaranteeing Powers, is that this Government professed to exhibit, or perhaps had, so great a terror of the Turks, and imagined that by shaking the shreds of the Treaty of Paris in the gaze of the Porte, that the latter might stay the hand of incursion on Wallachian territory; in fact, it was not all a cry of despair, but one of fear.

Again, it was given out that the passage of the Pruth took this Government by surprise; but the movement occurred on the 24th, and the Conventions were signed on the 16th; it is now advanced, that the vexation of the Government at this incident was not surprise, but rather vexation, that the Russian army had crossed the frontier before the Conventions had been submitted to the Legislature; while the alleged indignation of the Government that the Grand Duke's proclamation was put in circulation, is also probably excused or explained in a manner after which it is not necessary to search.

The Conventions may be almost characterised as a Treaty of alliance under disguise; and your Lordship will note that Roumania succeeds in extracting a distinct declaration respecting no detriment to and the integrity of her territory as settled by Treaties, &c.

I have heard it rumoured that the Conventions have been antedated; but it seems to me that such a proposal could hardly have been made to the Russian Plenipotentiary even by the Roumanian Government.

At any rate, we have nothing to do with such surmises; the dates of the incidents and known acts of the Roumanian Cabinet form the only points which must be taken into consideration.

I also beg to inclose an "Exposé de Motifs" by M. Cogalniceano, which is somewhat plausible, but no light is thrown on the circumstances which I have detailed in the earlier part of this despatch.

The Conventions have been voted in both Chambers by preponderant majorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 224.

Convention between the Roumanian and Russian Governments, dated April 16, 1877.

(Translation.)

WORKING in accord with the other Great Powers for the amelioration of the conditions of existence of the Christians subject to the dominion of the Sultan, the Imperial Government of Russia drew the attention of the Guaranteeing Cabinets to the necessity of assuring in an efficacious manner the execution of the reforms demanded of the Porte.

As the excitement of the Mussulmans, and the visible weakness of the Ottoman Government, do not allow it to be hoped that serious measures will be taken for the execution on the part of the Turkish authorities, a military intervention from without may become necessary. In the case of the ulterior development of political affairs in the East forcing Russia to assume this task, and to direct her army into Turkey in Europe, the Imperial Government, desiring to respect the inviolability of the territory of the Roumanian State, has agreed to conclude with the Government of His Highness Prince Charles I a special Convention relative to the passage of the Russian troops through Roumania. Therefore were designated as Plenipotentiaries, on the part of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, Baron D. Stuart, State Counsellor, Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General of Russia in Roumania, Chevalier of the Order of St. Vladimir, 3rd Class, St. Ann, 2nd Class, and Medjidie, 3rd Class, &c., &c., &c.; on the part of His Highness the Prince of Roumania, M. Cogalniceano, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Grand Cross of the Order of St. Ann, 1st Class; Iron Cross, 1st Class; Medjidie, 1st Class, &c.; who, after having exchanged their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed to the following:—

ARTICLE I.

The Government of His Highness the Prince of Roumania, Charles I, assures to the Russian army, which will be called to go into Turkey, a free passage through Roumanian territory and the treatment reserved for friendly armies.

All the expenses which may be occasioned for the necessities of the Russian army, for transport, and to satisfy all its requirements, fall naturally to the charge of the Imperial Government.

ARTICLE II.

That no detriment nor danger may result to Roumania, from the fact of the passage of Russian troops on her territory, the Government of His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias undertakes to maintain and to cause to be respected the political rights of the Roumanian State, as resulting from internal laws and existing Treaties, as also to maintain and defend the actual integrity of Roumania.

ARTICLE III.

All the details relative to the passage of Russian troops, their relations with the local authorities, as well as all arrangements which have to be made for this purpose, will form a special Convention, which will be signed by the Delegates of both Governments, and ratified at the same time as the present, and will come immediately into operation.

ARTICLE IV.

The Government of His Highness the Prince of Roumania undertakes to obtain for the present Convention, as also for that mentioned in the preceding Article, the ratification required by the Roumanian laws, and to render immediately executory the stipulations therein contained.

In faith of which the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed and sealed with their arms the present Convention.

Done in Bucharest $\frac{4}{16}$th of April, in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven.

(Signed) BARON DEMITRI STUART, *Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General of Russia in Roumania.* (L.S.)

(Signed) M. COGALNICEANO, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of Roumania.* (L.S.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 224.

Additional Convention between Roumanian and Russian Governments, dated April 16, 1877.

(Translation.)

FOR the execution of Article III of the Convention signed this day, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have met to regulate, by the present Special Convention, the agreements relative to the passage of the Imperial Russian troops, as also their relations with the local authorities.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

ARTICLE I.

The Roumanian Government accords to the Russian army the use of the railways, rivers, roads, Roumanian posts and telegraphs, and places at its disposition the material resources of the country, in the way of provisions, forage, and transport, in the manner and under the conditions stipulated in the following Articles:—

ARTICLE II.

The relations of the Russian military authorities with the local authorities will be made by means of Special Roumanian Commissary Commissioners named to that effect. One Principal Commissioner will be delegated to the Commander-in-chief of the Russian troops during the whole time of their passage through Roumania.

ARTICLE III.

The Roumanian Commissioner will be charged to give information relative to the material resources (such as forage, provisions, firing, &c.) which the country can furnish during the passage of the Russian troops along the railways, as also on the banks of the Pruth and the Danube, indicating the approximate prices of these articles at the places where they are to be delivered, the quantities which could be supplied, and the time when deliveries could be made.

ARTICLE IV.

The Russian military authorities, after informing themselves of the particulars mentioned in the previous Article, will decide on the quantities of the products which will be necessary for them, and on the places where they shall be delivered, and they will arrange with the Roumanian Commissioner as to the mode of delivery.

The furnishing of supplies will be made for account of the Russian army, either by the Roumanian authorities at agreed prices, or with the aid of the latter, by tender, on commission, or by direct purchase.

ARTICLE V.

A similar course will be adopted for all acquisitions necessary for encampments, bivouacing, the transport of troops, their baggage, material, and munition of war, as also for hospitals, ambulance, and hospital stores. Roumanian authorities will facilitate the supplying of these necessaries.

ARTICLE VI.

The Roumanian Government places at the disposition of the Russian army all the railways in the country for its transport, for that of its material, baggage, and stores which accompany it, as also of those things the transport of which may be necessary later. In respect of this transport the Imperial army will be entirely assimilated with the Roumanian army, and will be entitled to the same rights and prerogatives as the latter in all that concerns the obligations of the Railway Companies with reference to troops, and other conditions and details stipulated for the transport of soldiery by the Cahiers des Charges of the Companies, and by the laws and regulations in vigour in Roumania.

As to the cost of transport, the Roumanian Government undertakes *à priori* to reduce the ordinary tariff 40 per cent., and reserves to itself the arranging of this question by an ulterior understanding with the Companies.

As to what concerns expenses and additional payments, such as registration, manipulation, &c., the same course will be adopted as that for the transport of Roumanian soldiery.

ARTICLE VII.

The Roumanian Ministry for Public Works will give, on the demand of the Russian Military Traffic Director, the necessary orders and instructions to the administrations of the Roumanian railways; so as to assure with the greatest possible success and celerity, the transport of the Imperial army with its material, baggage, supplies, &c., according to a plan to be agreed on beforehand as is below stipulated.

Military trains will have priority over all others, excepting the post-trains, and without prejudice to the transport of Roumanian troops.

In case of need, the number of ordinary passenger trains may be reduced, and the circulation of goods-trains entirely stopped if necessary.

ARTICLE VIII.

For the transport of the Imperial troops and material on the Jassy-Unghéni line, which is of the same guage as the Russian railways, a unity and continuity of the technical conditions of circulation will be established, after an understanding between both administrations, so as to avoid any delay or changing of carriages at the frontier.

ARTICLE IX.

So as to obtain the necessary unity of working on the Roumanian railways, to secure the most prompt and well-regulated transport of the Russian army, with its baggage, material, and munition of war of all descriptions, a Central Council will be instituted, under the direction of the Ministry of Public Works, composed of delegates from the different Companies owning parts of the Roumanian Railways. A Commissioner, named by the head of military communications of the Imperial army, will be delegated to the Ministry of Public Works to facilitate the business with the Russian military authorities.

The traffic service on all the Roumanian lines will be conducted provisionally under the immediate direction of the Central Council, the Minister of Public Works causing its working to agree with the wants and requirements which will be expressed by the chief of military communications concerning the transport in question.

ARTICLE X.

The superior direction and inspection of transport of the Imperial army will belong to the chief of military communications of the said army. So as to secure the continuous and regular service for this transport, it will be worked through a Roumanian Commissioner delegated *ad hoc*, and will suggest through him all the necessary measures to this effect.

ARTICLE XI.

The head of military communications will have the faculty of demanding, through the Roumanian Commissioner delegated to him, or through his delegate with the Central Council, the execution of all the works necessary for increasing and for the security of traffic, both on the lines and in the stations, the rolling stock, platforms, sidings, auxiliary embranchments, provisional stations, and the appropriation of goods-waggons and trucks for the transport of men, horses, material, &c. All the cost occasioned by these works will be at the charge of the Russian army; the manner of their being carried out will be regulated between the Minister of Public Works and the chief of the military communications of the Russian army.

ARTICLE XII.

In cases of urgency, the head of military communications will have the faculty, after a preliminary understanding with the Roumanian Commissioner, to replace, by the means at his disposal, everything that may be wanting or may threaten to impede the movement of the Russian army.

He may cause to be immediately suspended by the Roumanian Commissioner, and require of the Minister of Public Works, the dismissal of employés and subaltern agents who may show signs of insubordination.

ARTICLE XIII.

If the necessities of communication of the Russian armies make the construction of a section or branch railway necessary on Roumanian territory, the works will be executed by the Russian military authorities at the expense of the Imperial Government.

The Roumanian Government will facilitate these works, and take the required dispositions, so as to secure for the Russian army the right to enjoy temporarily the ground indispensable for the instalment of these railway sections or branch lines, on the basis adopted in Roumania for works of public utility.

When these lines become useless, the materials ("mobile") used in their construction will be at the disposal of the Russian Government, but the works executed will become the property of the Roumanian Government without any remuneration.

ARTICLE XIV.

The working of the Roumanian lines will be carried on by the existing companies and administrations, under the direction of the Council mentioned in Article IX of the present Convention.

The companies will be indemnified for all transport effected under the tariff to be established in accordance with Article VI. These companies will also be repaid for all injuries which may accrue to their material through its use or abuse by Russian troops.

ARTICLE XV.

A plan for the transport of troops, lists of military trains, forms and details of requisitions for transport, documents of book-keeping and control, the terms and mode of payment, as also states during the time of transport, between Russian troops and the local agents of the Roumanian railways, will be regulated, immediately after the signing of the present Convention, by the Commissioner *ad hoc*.

The companies and the railway administrations must furnish him with all necessary documents and the materials to enable him to make this plan, the time-tables and details of service, and must afford him every assistance.

Every question of detail regulated by this Commissioner, and forming special instructions, which, being approved by the head of military communications of the Imperial army and by the Roumanian commissary delegated to him, will be obligatory, both for the Russian troops and for the employés of the railways.

ARTICLE XVI.

During the passage of the Imperial army any crime or misdemeanour committed by railway employés, with the intention of hindering or stopping the transport of troops, or of putting military trains in danger, will be punished according to the existing Roumanian laws, and with the same rigour as if directed against the Roumanian army.

ARTICLE XVII.

The Roumanian Government accords to the Russian army the use of the State posts and telegraphs, and those of the railway companies, on the same footing as the Roumanian authorities whose expenses do not enter into the State Budget. Thus Russian official despatches will have priority over private correspondence.

So as not to impede the ordinary telegraph service, the Russian army will have the faculty, whenever it may be found necessary, to add for themselves an extra wire of their own to the telegraph posts of the State, and to those of the companies, and to fix their own apparatus for their especial use. Such wires will be guarded and looked after the same as Roumanian wires, and without any cost to the Russian army; repairs, however, will be charged for.

ARTICLE XVIII.

A line will be established in the rear of the Russian armies with places for store-houses, the town of Bucharest, where there will not be any Russian troops, being excepted.

It is well understood that the troops will not stop except where necessary for resting (or if they find obstacles independent of their will) and only the strict time needed for this purpose.

Along this line, as along the lines the troops move on—storehouses, magazines, and depôts for provisions, forage and food of all descriptions, may be made—as also bakeries for bread and biscuits—kitchens for the troops, &c. The sites with this purpose will be engaged by the Commissaries of the Russian army, with the concurrence of the Roumanian, on the same conditions as those for the requirements of the State. Similar measures will be taken for the acquisition of the materials necessary for the construction and instalment of the said establishments.

ARTICLE XIX.

The sick and wounded of the Russian army will be treated and cared for in sanitary establishments, organized for this purpose on the lines of communication, and those of the storehouses, and "étapes," wherever the Russian Commander-in-chief may deem it necessary—excepting the town of Bucharest—and, as far as possible, away from the centres of population, excepting always hospitals for the wounded.

The Roumanian authorities will give their aid, and accord every facility for the installation of sanitary establishments, as also for the hiring of edifices necessary for such purposes. In places where there will be no Russian hospitals, the sick may be admitted provisionally, as far as possible, into Roumanian sanitary establishments, on payment of expenses for food, treatment, &c.

ARTICLE XX.

In localities where halts may be necessary during the passage of the Russian troops, under the conditions of Article XVIII—these troops will have facilities given them for lodging and encampment—which will be procured for them by the care of the local authorities. If from this cause payment become necessary, it will be regulated according to an understanding between the respective Commissioners.

ARTICLE XXI.

On the lines of communication of the Imperial army, in localities where military necessities demand the naming of Commanders of Russian stations, these Commanders will communicate with the local authorities through the Roumanian Commissaries according to Article II.

ARTICLE XXII.

The Russian army will have the faculty of establishing bridges and river communications at points where it may be considered necessary, and to construct the works necessary for securing and protecting this passage. The Roumanian Government, for this object, will place barges and boats, &c., at the disposition of the Russian army; *i.e.*, such as can be procured, and as far as the requirements of its own army allow, besides the quantity of wood necessary for construction and other materials, on equitable payment.

ARTICLE XXIII.

All payments to be effected, on the occasion of the passage of Russian troops through Roumania, whether to the Government, to the Railway Companies, or to private persons, will be calculated on the basis of the monetary unity, Roumanian or French.

These can be made either in money, or "bons," in due form emitted by the Commander of the Imperial army, and payable by the chest of said army, within two months at the outside. The form of these bills, their terms, mode, and place of payment, and control will be regulated and brought to the knowledge of the public, after an understanding between the Russian Commander-in-chief and the Roumanian Commissary-General.

ARTICLE XXIV.

The Roumanian Government accords to the Russian Government for the term whilst the Imperial troops are in Roumania, and on this side of the Danube the free importation into its territory, without duties, and the free transit of all articles and objects for the provisioning, and munition and war materiel, destined for the use of the Imperial army; and even those things, the entry of which is prohibited by Roumanian regulations.

ARTICLE XXV.

Should desertions take place of Russian troops during the passage through Roumania, the Roumanian authorities will assist to arrest the culprits, according to indications to be given by the Russian military authorities. Deserters arrested will be given over into the hands of the Russian Military Commanders nearest to the spot where the arrestations are made.

ARTICLE XXVI.

Any cases of differences which may occur on the occasion of the passage of Russian troops through Roumania, and which is not provided for by this Convention, shall be regulated by common accord by the Commissioners named *ad hoc* by the Chief Commander of the Russian forces and the Roumanian Commissioner-General.

In faith of which, the respective Plenipotentiaries have put their signatures and seals of their arms to this Supplementary Convention.

Made in double in Bucharest, the $\frac{16}{28}$ of April, in the year of Grace 1877.

(Signed) BARON D. STUART,
Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General of Russia in Roumania.

(Signed) M. COGALNICEANO,
Minister of Foreign Affairs in Roumania.

Inclosure 3 in No. 224.

Exposé de Motifs.

(Translation.)

THE speech from the Throne on the opening of the present extraordinary session of the Legislative Corps is the best "exposé de motifs" of the annexed project of law relative to the Conventions concluded with the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the Russians.

In the face of an imminent war between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, all the demands that we have made, all the persistance that we have used with the Great Powers to induce them to acknowledge and place under the shield of Europe the neutrality of Roumanian territory, all has remained in vain.

On being convinced that the passage of the Russian army through our country was imperatively asked and decided on, the Government was under the necessity of merely occupying itself with what concerns our interests of conservation, straining our energy to get the Roumanian State acknowledged, to maintain our rights and our political institutions, and to preserve and guarantee the integrity of the Roumanian frontiers.

It was essential for us to care for our population, and, as far as possible, to relieve it from the onerousness which the passage of even a large friendly army entails.

With this view the two annexed Conventions have been concluded, with the reserve of the approbation of the Legislative Bodies.

As it results from their contents, these Conventions have no other political character than to cause to be respected, even in time of war, our political individuality as it is guaranteed by the Treaty of Paris, that is to say, the *statu quo* of our frontiers, our rights and our institutions.

No change whatever is made in our condition of existence as a nation. No alteration nor breaking of any of our international bonds is forced upon us, and still less is the co-operation of our army claimed, whose mission is to attack nobody, but only to defend, within the limits of possibility, our frontiers.

Thus the unique and only object of these Conventions is to conserve what we possess.

Beyond these considerations these Conventions relate more especially to regulating the relations of the authorities and our populace with the military authorities and the Russian armies during their passage through our territory, and to render that passage as little onerous as possible for the country.

All the requirements of the army, it is well understood and agreed, are to be made by common understanding and against full payment, and it is specially stipulated that the capital of Roumania shall not be occupied by Russian troops.

If a similar understanding has not been arrived at also with the Imperial Ottoman Government it is because (apart from considerations of a superior nature, the appreciation of which it is not necessary to dilate on) it is to be considered that a Convention, if signed with the Ottoman Government on the same terms in which these are signed with the Imperial Russian Government, would have signified not merely the facilitating of the passage simply of an army through our territory to find its enemy beyond our frontier, but it would have signified the transportation of the theatre of war into Roumania, and have done this also with our own consent.

This we did not and do not think could enter into the wishes of the nation, nor could it be in its interests.

Besides, the Ottoman Government, even in view of a war at hand, has not thought fit to depart from its negative policy, adhered to constantly with regard to Roumania. Notwithstanding that, according to Treaties, we have a permanent Diplomatic Agent at Constantinople, as we have had a Delegate on an extraordinary mission—and this even during the late Conference—the Porte did not think fit, even once, to remain on a good understanding with the Roumanian Government concerning political eventualities, nor even relative to matters of a secondary interest, and which remain unsettled for years.

Only at the moment of the war breaking out the Grand Vizier thought it opportune to address to us, by telegram, the two annexed despatches, the form and matter of which we leave to the appreciation of the Legislative Assemblies, although the following day the Minister replied thereto.

It now remains for the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, representing together the voice of the Roumanian nation, to speak with their full Constitutional power.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs,
(Signed) COGALNICEANO.

No. 225.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 65. Political.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, April* 30, 1877.

IN a conversation with M. Cogalniceano, of which I have had the honour to-day to forward the substance by telegraph, the Minister affirmed to me in the most solemn manner that this Government had no intention to declare war against the Porte, refuse the tribute, or in any way march with the Russians. He reiterated over and over again, "our only desire is to keep what we have got, and in no way alter our political position." He also assured me that, as soon as the chance was at an end of the war not being brought upon Roumanian territory, the army would be completely demobilized.

I informed the Minister that I considered that such a policy would be a cause of congratulation to this country and the Government, that I sincerely trusted that they would stand firm in a position such as he had sketched out, that a policy of adventure could be fraught with nothing but evil, that Roumania had no interest in the existing conflict, while the state of her finances demanded imperatively that the resources of the country should not be unnecessarily subjected to a further strain.

Various causes may have been inducing this Government to pursue a more prudent policy; the conviction may be gaining upon them, that they have nothing to gain by taking part in the campaign, or they may have received no encouragement from Russia. Indeed, in justice to Russia, it must be said, that from the beginning, even dating from the month of September, there has been no indication that any encouragement has been given to the advances of Roumania.

The language of Baron Stuart to myself and others would have been impossible had he received instructions to foster or even approve the various measures of mobilization, &c., which have been put in execution last autumn, and, again, within the last fortnight; the Baron would have inferred approbation, or at any rate have been more indulgent in his remarks, instead of criticizing the Roumanian policy in a cold and even depreciatory sense, and I am aware that he continues to hold the same language on the subject, even now that the Convention has been signed, and the Russian forces entered upon the campaign, letting it be clearly seen that this Government has been influenced by terror of the Turks, or advantage to themselves, rather than by a desire to assist the advance of the Imperial army.

If Russia were, even now, to desire the cooperation of the Roumanian army, notwithstanding the assurances of M. Cogalniceano, time will alone show whether the military proclivities of Prince Charles will not carry the day, in which case M. Cogalniceano might have to resign, or to plead the force of circumstances, and I should add that I am far from considering that his present language is to be taken as a definition of the policy of this Government, or even as representing the present views of M. Bratiano.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 226.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 69. Political.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, May* 2, 1877.

PRINCE NICHOLAS DOLGOROUKI arrived at this place on Saturday the 28th ultimo, as the bearer of an autograph letter from the Emperor of Russia for Prince Charles.

It is stated that the letter in question was, firstly, a reply to a letter of this Prince, which was forwarded to Kischeneff to congratulate the Emperor on his arrival; and, secondly, to offer an explanation on the entry of the Russian armies into these Principalities before the subject had received the sanction of the legislative obligatory under the Constitution.

Many reports are in circulation to the effect that negotiations are on foot respecting these Principalities taking an active part in the campaign in co-operation with the Russian army; but, if such negotiations are going on at the present moment, it appears to me that they would be conducted through other channels.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 227.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 70. Political. Confidential.)

Bucharest, May 2, 1877.

My Lord,

GENERAL CERNAT called upon me yesterday to pay me his official visit on being named Minister of War.

The General maintains precisely the same language as M. Cogalniceano respecting the attitude and policy of the Moldo-Wallachian Government; in the course of conversation, the General told me that they have now 40,000 men under arms, while the Minister of Foreign Affairs informed to-day that there are 50,000.

Public rumour estimates the force at the higher figure, and your Lordship will perceive the extreme difficulty of arriving at the truth in this country, when there is discrepancy even in the official version.

To all appearances the mobilisation takes very nearly the form of a "levée en masse;" the whole of the militia is to be organized with the utmost speed, representing a force, if complete, of 46,000 men of all arms. All the three classes are included, even to married men with families.

The military requisitions take a most extended form; horses, cattle, transport, forage, and provisions are being seized in enormous quantities, quite out of proportion with the alleged attitude of the Government.

The requisitions are being imposed in an oppressive manner, and, it is stated, with much partiality; indeed, it may be doubted whether even a Turkish occupation could have produced a ruin equal to what is now being initiated.

The resentment in all classes against the present measures of the Government is very general, more especially from the fact being perfectly recognized, that the strain to which the country is now being subjected is due to the ambition, political as well as military, of Prince Charles.

Again, the panic which has been caused in the Danubian districts has its origin with the Government, and has doubtless been set on foot to encourage anti-Turkish and pro-Russian sympathies. The town of Giurgevo has been almost abandoned by the inhabitants, and has become a prey to housebreakers and disorderly persons; while in the rural districts marauders are pillaging everything which has been left behind by the peasants in their flight inland.

Whatever may be the policy and intention of this Government, the present result is most disastrous, and it may be almost said that, before a shot has been fired, this unfortunate country has been made to anticipate a fair moiety of the horrors of war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 228.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 71. Political.)

Bucharest, May 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I BEG to transmit to your Lordship copies of communications which have recently passed between this Government and the Sublime Porte.

I beg to direct your Lordship's attention to the circumstance, that at the date of the reply of the Moldo-Wallachian Government to the Porte, the Conventions with Russia had already been signed since some days!!!

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 228.

The Grand Vizier to the Prince of Roumania.

(Télégraphique.)

LA concentration de l'armée Russe sur le Pruth; les préparatifs ostensibles faits par la Russie, en vue d'une action militaire, et d'autres indices non moins significatifs, ne

peuvent laisser à Son Altesse, non plus qu'à la Porte, aucun doute sur le danger d'une situation que la Porte avait déjà signalée à l'attention du Gouvernement Roumain, et qui semble menacer d'une invasion par les Russes le territoire de la Principauté.

Dans cette conjoncture, et conformément aux prévisions de l'Article XXVI du Traité de Paris, et du paragraphe 3 de l'Article VIII de la Convention du 19 Avril, 1858, je viens, au nom de Sa Majesté le Sultan, inviter votre Altesse à se concerter avec la Sublime Porte, afin d'arrêter, en commun, les mesures militaires propres à assurer la défense du territoire Roumain, en raison des dangers éventuels qui le menacent. Je n'attends que la réponse de votre Altesse pour donner les instructions nécessaires à cet effet au Serdar Ekrem, Abdul Kerim Pacha, qui se trouve sur le Danube à la tête des armées Ottomanes et avec lequel, en attendant, les autorités militaires de votre Altesse peuvent se concerter, en cas d'urgence.

Inclosure 2 in No. 228.

The Grand Vizier to the Prince of Roumania.

(Télégraphique.)

LA Russie a déclaré la guerre à l'Empire Ottoman et envahi le territoire Princier pour commencer les hostilités. La Sublime Porte croit pouvoir compter que, dans cette grave circonstance, le Gouvernement Princier agira toujours en conformité avec les principes qui découlent des liens unissant les Principautés à l'Empire Ottoman.

Inclosure 3 in No. 228.

M. Cogalniceano to the Grand Vizier.

(Télégraphique.)

LE Gouvernement Princier a pris connaissance de la dépêche adressée par votre Altesse, le 22 de ce mois, à Son Altesse le Prince de Roumanie.

La teneur de cette dépêche, qui nous demande de prendre des mesures militaires, d'accord avec les armées Impériales, pour repousser l'invasion Russe, est d'une nature trop grave pour que le Pouvoir Exécutif prenne sur lui de se prononcer. J'ai donc l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Altesse que le Parlement Roumain a seul le droit de décider si la Roumanie doit prendre part à la guerre, et par conséquent sortir de la voie de neutralité qui lui est tracée par les Traités, neutralité qui lui a été constamment recommandée par la Sublime Porte, aussi bien que par les Puissances Garantes.

Le Parlement est convoqué en session extraordinaire pour le 26 Avril. Aussitôt après la vérification des titres du nouveau Sénat, la situation politique sera d'urgence communiquée aux Corps Législatifs, et avant tout la dépêche de votre Altesse. Immédiatement après, je m'empresserai de communiquer au Gouvernement Impérial la décision de notre Parlement. Votre Altesse, aujourd'hui Premier Ministre d'un Gouvernement Constitutionnel et Parlementaire, ne pourrait demander que le Ministère Roumain viole les prescriptions d'une Constitution reconnue par l'Europe et que, sans l'avis de la nation, il se prononce dans une affaire d'une importance aussi grande que celle qui forme l'objet de la dépêche du Gouvernement Impérial.

Lettre explicative et détails par le courrier.

No. 229.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 8.)

(No. 51. Political. Confidential.)

Belgrade, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE been informed to-day by M. Ristitch that there is no truth in the report circulated by the English and foreign press, relative to the Porte having asked permission for a portion of the Turkish army to pass through Servian territory to Gladova, a town on the Danube opposite the Roumanian frontier.

Though M. Ristitch assures me that no warlike preparations are being made, I observe great activity in the despatch of troops and munitions of war to the frontier, as well as in the arrival of recruits from the country.

It is generally believed that, should the Russians gain a few victories, the Servians will not be long in joining them, and again commencing hostilities with Turkey.

On my putting the question to M. Ristitch, he acknowledged the possibility of such a contingency, as the war party, worked upon by the few Russians still here, would then become very powerful. At the same time, he expressed to me his annoyance at the Russian General Fadnieff's departure for Montenegro or Agram having been postponed on account of a pretended slight indisposition.

Though M. Ristitch never loses an opportunity of impressing on me his desire for the maintenance of peace, I have reason to believe that, had he foreseen the probability of so early a declaration of war by Russia, the Porte's overtures for peace would not have been accepted. He now appears to be made the scape-goat by Prince Milan, who would gladly dismiss him could he find any one to put in his place.

At a dinner to which I was invited a few days ago by Prince Milan, His Highness could not conceal the satisfaction which the prospect of war between Russia and Turkey caused him, and expressed to me his intention (as I have already telegraphed to your Lordship) to receive the Turks "à coups de canons," should they attempt to cross the Servian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 230.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 352.) *Paris, May 5, 1877.*

My Lord,

IT is stated to me that an arrangement was made privately yesterday, in virtue of which a sum of from 3,000,000*l.* to 5,000,000*l.* sterling, at 8 per cent. interest, is to be advanced to the Russian Government by the Comptoir d'Escompte at Paris, in conjunction with a St. Petersburgh firm and a Berlin firm.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 231.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 357.) *Paris, May 7, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship, extracted from the "Journal Officiel" of this day, a Declaration of Neutrality in the war between Russia and Turkey, which has been issued by the French Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 231.

Extract from the "Journal Officiel" of May 7, 1877.

Versailles, le 6 Mai, 1877.

LE Gouvernement de la République ayant résolu d'observer une stricte neutralité dans la guerre qui vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie, croit devoir rappeler aux Français résidant en France ou à l'étranger qu'ils doivent s'abstenir de tout fait qui, commis en violation des lois Françaises ou du droit des gens, pourrait être considéré comme un acte hostile à l'une des deux parties ou contraire à une scrupuleuse neutralité. Il leur est interdit notamment de s'enrôler ou de prendre du service, soit dans l'armée de terre, soit à bord de bâtiments de guerre de l'un ou de l'autre des belligérants ou de concourir à l'équipement ou à l'armement d'un navire de guerre.

Le Gouvernement déclare en outre qu'il ne sera permis à aucun navire de guerre de l'un ou de l'autre des belligérants d'entrer et de séjourner avec des prises dans les ports ou rades de la France et de ses colonies pendant plus de vingt-quatre heures, hors le cas de relâche forcée, ou de nécessité justifiée.

Aucune vente d'objets provenant de prises ne pourra avoir lieu dans les dits ports ou rades.

Les personnes qui contreviendraient aux défenses susmentionnées ne pourront prétendre à aucune protection du Gouvernement ou de ses agents contre les actes ou mesures que les belligérants pourraient exercer ou décrêter, et seront poursuivies, s'il y a lieu, conformément aux lois de l'Etat.

No. 232.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, May 8, 1877.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs will instruct German Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to support request for a prolongation of days of grace for neutral vessels in the notification of blockade as suggested by your Lordship.

No. 233.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.*

CAPTAIN GRENFELL had better not proceed to St. Petersburgh at present.

He should proceed to the German ports in the Baltic, and endeavour to learn there what he can of Russian naval preparations and probable movements.

You should give him any advice and assistance you can to enable him to obtain such information.

No. 234.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 8, 1877, 1·30 P.M.*

I HAVE been informed confidentially that the Sultan yesterday decided upon the admission of Christians into the army, and ordered a Decree to that effect to be prepared at once.

No. 235.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 8, 1877.*

ROUMANIAN Ministry, under the influence of Prince Charles, is drifting more and more towards war with the Porte and a declaration of independence.

No. 236.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

BARON LOHNEYSEN, a cavalry officer, and formerly aide-de-camp of Emperor, and another Austrian officer, have received permission to join the head-quarters of Russian army of Danube.

No. 237.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 8.*)

Vienna, May 8, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Austro-Hungarian Government have already made a representation at Constantinople in favour of vessels loading in Russian ports being allowed more than five days' grace, and with reference to your telegram to Mr. Layard of yesterday, they will further send instructions to ask for fifteen days for vessels taking in cargo, and a sufficient time to meet the cases of vessels on their way to Russian ports.

No. 238.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 8.*)

Vienna, May 8, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PRINCE REUSS is expected here to-day, and will sail for Constantinople on Saturday by the same Trieste steam-packet in which Count Zichy will return to his post.

No. 239.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 8.*)

Vienna, May 8, 1877, 2·25 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to Mr. Holmes's telegram, forwarded to me by your Lordship yesterday, I am informed that about ten days ago about twenty insurgents who were driven across Bosnian frontier near Bishacs were disarmed by Austrian authorities, but nothing of the kind has occurred since. It frequently happens, however, that insurgents make towards the frontier of Turkey, and troops do not take measures to oblige them to cross it.

No. 240.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 8.*)

Rome, May 8, 1877, 2 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IN consequence of representations of several Chambers of Commerce, the Minister for Foreign Affairs has already instructed Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to represent hardship of short term allowed to neutral vessels to leave and enter Russian ports. His Excellency is grateful for communication of instructions to Mr. Layard, and will at once desire Chargé d'Affaires to join his efforts to obtain a prolongation of the period of grace.

No. 241.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877, 5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Turkish Government having now agreed to allow Russian subjects to remain in Turkey under German protection, have renewed their request that Turkish subjects in Russia may be placed under British protection.

Her Majesty's Government have consented, and you will inform Russian Government and instruct Consuls accordingly.

No. 242.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877, 7 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT has been represented to Her Majesty's Government that large British steamers after loading at Nicolaieff, Taganrog, and some other ports in the Black Sea and Sea of Azoff, are obliged to discharge a portion of their cargo into lighters in order to enable them to pass the bars at Ochakow, Yenikale, and other places. The operation of loading and unloading occupies several days, and the owners fear that by reason of this delay they may risk the capture of their vessels or of the lighters.

I have to instruct you to explain the position of these vessels to the Turkish Government, and to ask that extra time may be allowed them for lightening and reloading their vessels on passing the bars.

No. 243.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 8.*)

Paris, May 8, 1877, 5·10 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, French Minister for Foreign Affairs instructs French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to join Her Majesty's Ambassador in endeavouring to obtain a prolongation of the days of grace allowed to neutral vessels.

No. 244.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 178.)

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE to state to you that the Turkish Government have finally agreed to allow Russian subjects to remain in Turkey under German protection, and under these circumstances they have renewed their request to Her Majesty's Government that Turkish subjects in Russia may be placed under British protection during the war.

Her Majesty's Government have acceded to this request, and I have to instruct you to inform the Russian Government, and to issue the necessary directions to Her Majesty's Consuls.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 245.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 170. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday's date, stating that Captain Grenfell had arrived at Berlin, and wished to be informed whether he was to proceed to St. Petersburgh or not, I have to request your Excellency to state to Captain Grenfell that it would not be advisable for him for the present to go to St. Petersburgh, but he should proceed to the German ports in the Baltic, and endeavour to ascertain there what naval preparations the Russians are making, and their probable movements.

Your Excellency will be good enough to give Captain Grenfell any advice and assistance you can to enable him to carry out his mission.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 246.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 80.)

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that the Queen has been pleased to signify her commands that Lieutenant-General Sir Collingwood Dickson should be temporarily attached to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

Your Excellency will accordingly consider General Dickson as forming part of your diplomatic establishment, and you will employ him in the business of the Embassy in whatever way you may deem most beneficial for Her Majesty's service.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 247.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 81.)

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that the Queen has been pleased to signify her commands that Captain Hugh McCalmont, 7th Hussars, Captain Henry Trotter, Royal Engineers, and Captain John Cookson Fife, 65th Regiment, should be temporarily attached to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

Your Excellency will accordingly consider those gentlemen as forming part of your diplomatic establishment, and you will employ them in the business of the Embassy in whatever way you may deem most beneficial for Her Majesty's service.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 248.

The Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, with reference to the telegram from Safvet Pasha, which you communicated to me yesterday, that I have informed Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh that Her Majesty's Government have, at the renewed request of the Porte, undertaken the protection of Turkish subjects in Russia.

I have instructed his Excellency to inform the Russian Government of this arrangement.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 249.

Mr. Lister to Captain McCalmont.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 250.

Mr. Lister to Captain Trotter, R.E.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 251.

Mr. Lister to Captain Fife.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 252.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 5. Political.)

Jerusalem, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Vice-Admiral Hornby.

I have reported by telegraph to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires the information therein given relative to the advance of parties of Bedouins to the Jaffa Plain, and have added that the Redifs quartered here, who are natives of Palestine, are not to be relied on, on account of their tendency to desert.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 252.

Consul Moore to Vice-Admiral Hornby.

Jerusalem, April 26, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 24th ultimo, in which you are pleased to acquaint me that you have assumed the chief command of Her Majesty's Naval Forces on the Mediterranean Station, and to intimate your readiness to co-operate with me for the benefit of the Queen's service.

I beg leave to inform you that the present attitude of the Bedouin tribes in various directions around Jerusalem is of a nature to inspire uneasiness, some being at war amongst themselves, and others defying the authority of the Government. Within the last few days marauding parties have appeared in the Plain of Jaffa, advancing as far as Ramleh, and committing depredations and acts of violence, emboldened, no doubt, by the weakness of the military force which now remains at the disposal of the authorities.

Under these circumstances I consider that it would be advisable that a British man-of-war should be stationed on this part of the coast, so as to be immediately available in case of need, and for the good effect which her presence would produce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 253.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 35. Political.) *Scutari, April 29, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 33, Political, of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to report that the Turkish troops occupied Orosci without encountering any resistance on the 22nd instant. The place had, however, been abandoned by all the inhabitants, who had retired to the summits of the adjoining mountains.

Some resistance was offered by the son of Capitan Cola, who is an Aide-de-camp of the Prince of Montenegro, and a few followers, to the force advancing from the direction of Matia, and the Turks had four or five men killed and as many wounded, but since then all further active opposition has been abandoned.

Yesterday my Austrian and French colleagues received another letter dated the 22nd instant, from Prenk Bib Doda, urgently repeating his request for protection for himself and adherents, and stating that he had taken refuge on Monte Santo, the most inaccessible mountain in Mirdicia.

News has, however, now reached this, that Prenk Bib Doda has been received by Djellaleddin Bey at Luria, under "besa," or the sacred promise of hospitality. The Bey is a relative of Bib Doda's mother, who was originally a Mahommedan girl abducted by the young chieftain's father, according to traditional custom, from a powerful Mussulman family, in provision of occurrences such as the present, when the support of Moslem relatives, never really outraged by the forced marriage of their kinswoman, might be needful.

I am not aware what further measures the Turkish authorities propose taking against the Mirdites. Hafiz Pasha, a General who, it appears, had a prominent share in the suppression of the Bulgarian outbreak of last May, left this on the 26th instant for Orosci, but nothing is yet known as to what he has been instructed to accomplish.

It remains for the Turks to decide whether Mirdicia is to be allowed to subside immediately to its usual level of inoffensiveness, or whether, by an effort to abolish the customs and usuages of the mountains, it is to be goaded into a continuance of its insubordination.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

April 30.

P.S.—I have just been informed that the Turkish troops are about to be withdrawn from Mirdicia, with the exception of a few companies which will be left in some of the most important villages.

W. K. G.

No. 254.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 36. Political.) *Scutari, April 29, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed this day by me to Mr. Layard, in reply to his Excellency's inquiries regarding the presence in Albanian waters of Italian vessels of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 254.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, April 29, 1877.

Sir,

MY telegraphic reply to your Excellency's inquiries of yesterday evening was based on information furnished to me by my Italian colleague.

He told me that he had received this morning a telegram from Durazzo announcing the arrival in that port of the Italian Naval Commander-in-chief's despatch boat "Aution." He did not know what was the object of the vessel's visit, but, as fourteen men-of-war were now in the Bay of Taranto, it was not surprising that an aviso from this fleet should cross over to the Albanian coast.

M. Berio also stated that no other Italian man-of-war had visited these waters since the beginning of September last, when two vessels were sent to examine the port of Spiza.

Besides the fleet gathered at Taranto, I understand that 30,000 men are echeloned on the Italian coast opposite to North Albania.

For some time past reports have been very prevalent here that the Italian Government has made every preparation to occupy this province in the event of Austria entering Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

M. Berio denies most strenuously that any such idea is entertained by his Government; but, about six weeks ago, he read to me a part of some secret instructions which he had received from Rome, and by which he was desired to keep a most close watch on the proceedings of his Austrian colleague, as the Italian Government was desirous to counteract any plans that Austria might have with reference to this country.

I believe the language held by M. Berio to his colleagues and to others in general is not the same as that he holds with the Franciscan monks, who are the parochial clergy of most of the mountain tribes, and who receive stipends from the Italian Government.

Rumours are also rife here that M. Wassich, the Austrian Consul-General, is expecting shortly instructions to leave Scutari, as his position here would not be safe if the Austrian troops marched into Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 255.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 37. Political.) *Scutari, April 30, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the first act of hostilities on the southern Montenegrin frontier since the expiration of the armistice occurred on the 26th instant, near Gruda, a village on the confines of the Koutchi district, when a Turk and a Koutchi were killed.

There are now twenty-one battalions collected at Podgoritza, Spuz, Jabliak, and the block-houses on the eastern side of the Lake, under the immediate command of Field-Marshal Ali Sahib Pasha, who is seconded by the General of Division, Hussein Husni Pasha, and by the Brigadier-Generals Haki, Ali, and Hadj Hussein Husni Pashas.

On the western side of the Lake at Muric, Antivari, and the other forts, there are four battalions.

In Mirdicia there are eight battalions, besides two battalions of Mustahfiz (final levy of reserves), under the command of the General of Division, Hafiz Pasha, and Brigadier-General Abdi Pasha.

Eight batteries of artillery, of which two are composed of field and the rest of mountain guns, are distributed among the entire force of thirty-three battalions, and which may be estimated at about 22,000 men.

The commissariat arrangements are superintended in Scutari by the Vali, Field-Marshal Mustafa Pasha, and Brigadier-General Abdullah Pasha.

A report has reached this that the Montenegrins are collecting in considerable strength at Shistani, close to Muric; and I believe that Ali Sahib Pasha is fully prepared to find his communications with Antivari successfully interrupted by the Montenegrins. He is, however, of opinion that they will never be able to interfere with the free navigation of the Bojana; but should he be mistaken, the safety of his whole army would at once be compromised.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 256.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Paris, May 8, 1877.

(No. 367.)

My Lord,

IN obedience to the instructions sent to me by your Lordship yesterday by telegraph, I called the attention of the Duc Decazes this morning to the insufficiency of the days of grace allowed for neutral vessels by the Turkish notification of the blockade of the Russian coast of the Black Sea.

At the same time, I informed the Duke that your Lordship had directed Mr. Layard to do his best to induce the Porte to grant a prolongation sufficient to meet the cases of vessels already on their way to Russian ports; and I asked his Excellency whether the French Government would join in this representation to the Porte.

The Duc Decazes informs me in reply that he sends instructions to the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to unite his representations and efforts to those of Mr. Layard in order to obtain a prolongation of the days of grace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 257.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 9.)

Constantinople, le 7 Mai, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

LA question concernant l'expulsion des sujets Russes établis en Turquie a été l'objet d'une longue négociation entre la Sublime Porte et le Cabinet de Berlin. Nous avons exposé au Gouvernement Allemand toutes les raisons qui ne nous permettaient pas d'autoriser le séjour des Russes en Turquie. Le régime des Capitulations, la nationalité d'origine de la presque totalité de ces sujets, et enfin les précédents, nous donnaient parfaitement le droit d'insister sur notre demande. Toutefois, la Sublime Porte, pour ne pas indisposer le Gouvernement d'Allemagne, a cru devoir accéder au désir de ce dernier en consentant au séjour des sujets Russes en Turquie sous la protection de l'Ambassade et des autorités Consulaires Allemandes.

Il est, cependant, bien entendu que nos autorités ne rencontreront aucune difficulté si la nécessité se présentait de procéder à l'expulsion d'individus suspects, ou de les éloigner des frontières et des points exposés ou qui se trouveraient autrement en danger. En outre, toute personne ayant été au service de l'Ambassade ou des Consulats de Russie sera tenue de quitter le territoire Ottoman; et les sujets Russes qui seraient saisis dans les camps et convaincus d'espionnage seront justiciables des autorités militaires Ottomanes conformément aux lois de l'Empire.

No. 258.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Constantinople, May 8, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

VICE-CONSUL at Toultcha telegraphs that Captain of "Cockatrice" proposes leaving for Sulina on the 10th to avoid complications.

No. 259.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Constantinople, May 8, 1877, 11·55 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of the 7th instant, I am informed that the Porte consents to extend term for neutral vessels entering and leaving blockaded ports by seven days respectively; consequently vessels may go in up to the 15th, and out up to the 17th, inclusive.

No. 260.

Consul Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Odessa, May 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

VARIOUS Consuls received telegrams that ships must clear to-morrow.

Italian Consul just received telegram seven days' respite granted. Many English ships desiring information.

No. 261.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BRITISH shipowners represent strongly that owing to the conditions of the Black Sea trade in regard to lighterage and similar matters, and probability of accidental delays, the days of grace will be insufficient, even with the extension, to meet numerous cases and avert heavy losses to British commerce.

They urge that the time of grace should be regulated so as to admit of all neutral vessels entering the Black Sea before the 15th, being allowed to discharge and load in their port of destination.

Ask the Porte if this can be acceded to.

No. 262.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 9, 1877, 3·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

BRITISH owners of tugs and lighters on the Danube near Galatz have applied to Her Majesty's Government respecting danger of seizure and destruction to which their property is exposed by proceedings of Turkish naval and military authorities. They are anxious to send the tugs and lighters into Austrian waters. Urge strongly upon Porte to send orders to permit these vessels to ascend the river without molestation from gun-boats or forts.

No. 263.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Teheran, May 9, 1877, 3·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Russian Minister having requested a strictly private audience of the Shah to deliver a message from the Emperor, was received by His Majesty alone on the 5th instant. He then repeated the communication previously made to the Persian Government referred to in my telegram of 30th ultimo. The Shah referred him to his Minister, with whom accordingly he had an interview the day before yesterday, when he was informed that the Persian Government, considering there was no call upon them to interfere on behalf of the Christians, three of the great Christian Powers being themselves neutral, and that they were bound, as a Mahommedan Power, to consult the interests of Islamism, had resolved unanimously, notwithstanding their sympathies with Russia, and their grievances against, and national dislike to, Turkey, to remain neutral in the present war.

No. 264.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9.)

Bucharest, May 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

RUSSIAN forces are occupying strategical positions in the west of Moldavia, on the roads leading from the Austrian frontier.

Some shots were exchanged between Roumanian force at Kalafat and the Turks at Widdin. Roumanian Government state that Turks began.

No. 265.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 9.*)

Galatz, May 8, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
RUSSIANS' heavy guns opened fire from Ibraila and Turkish gun-boats left.

No. 266.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, May 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
I HAVE read to Count Beust, in the strictest confidence, my note to Count Schouvaloff of May 6. You may therefore also read or mention it to Count Andrassy, but in strict confidence, and to no one else.

No. 267.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Monson.

(No. 17.) *Foreign Office, May 9*, 1877.

Sir,
HER Majesty's Government entirely approve the manner in which you have conducted yourself in your relations with Prince Nicholas, from your return to Cettigné to the outbreak of renewed hostilities with the Porte; and have learnt with satisfaction from your despatch No. 122 of the 29th ultimo that your services have been fully appreciated by Prince Nicholas.

You have acted correctly in taking the course reported by Sir A. Buchanan in his No. 419 of the 5th instant, respecting the archives connected with your special mission and those of the Ragusa Consulate.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 268.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(No. 9.) *Foreign Office, May 9*, 1877.

Sir,
WITH reference to your despatch No. 33, Political, of April 30, I have to state to you that I approve the note which you addressed to the Russian Consul at Galatz, inquiring whether permission would be given to the English brig "Industry" to leave Ibraila.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 269.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 170. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, May 9*, 1877.

Sir,
I HAVE read in the strictest confidence to Count Beust my note to Count Schouvaloff of the 6th instant, wherein I pointed out the most prominent interests of this country which might be imperilled by the war, and which [Her Majesty's Government would be bound and determined to defend. I consequently authorize your Excellency to

read it or mention it to Count Andrassy, but you will do so in strict confidence not allude to it in conversation with anyone else.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 270.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 10.*)

(No. 27. Political.) *Bosna Serai, April 26*, 1877.

My Lord,
I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of two despatches of the 21st April, sent by me to Mr. Freeman, instructing him to inquire into the outrages said to be committed at Glamosh and Otchievo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure 1 in No. 270.

Consul Holmes to Vice-Consul Freeman.

Bosna Serai, April 21, 1877.

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to instruct you to proceed as soon as possible to Glamosh, and to inquire into the facts of an outrage which has been reported to have occurred there—the massacre of a Greek bridal procession. You will at the same time give me all the information you can collect on the real state of affairs in that neighbourhood, ascertaining, if possible, the relative numbers of the real Bosnians and the foreign sympathizers in arms. Also, whether the rising of the former has been spontaneous or forced, and any other particulars of interest. I shall be glad to have your report at the earliest possible moment; and I need hardly remind you that it is your duty to state, and my only desire to learn, the exact truth, without any care as to whether it coincides with the ideas prevailing here or elsewhere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 270.

Consul Holmes to Vice-Consul Freeman.

Bosna Serai, April 21, 1877.

Sir,
I HAVE just received the following telegram from Sir Andrew Buchanan:—

"A telegram dated 18th April, Obrovazzo, has been received at Trieste from Mr. Arthur Evans, stating:—

"'Returned from inquiry into outrages on returned refugees. Seen burnt villages Otchievo and neighbourhood. Five massacred. Twenty to twenty-five girls and women outraged. Examined twenty-three witnesses at different spots in Croatia and insurgent territory.

"'*Saturday.* (Signed) "'BUCHANAN.'"

I therefore request that after visiting Glamosh and terminating your inquiry as to the alleged massacre of the bridal procession, you will continue your journey to Otchievo in Bihach, which is on the frontier, nearly opposite Doliani in Austrian Croatia, and make the strictest possible inquiry into the truth of the atrocities reported by Mr. Evans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 271.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 28. Political.)

Bosna Serai, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that General Alimpitch, signing as commanding the army of the Drina, has written to the local Government here asking that some places should be appointed for receiving the large numbers of refugees now in Servia.

M. Ristich has also written about a boat full of refugees, who were arrested on crossing the Drina into Bosnia, and asking that the boatman, a Servian, should be released.

Until some proper arrangement is made, it is probable that there will always be mistakes, as the military guards suspect people crossing from Servia into Bosnia as being insurgents or robbers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 272.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 31. Political.)

Bosna Serai, April 27, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch, Political, No. 18, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the girl who, to all appearances, desired so ardently to become Mussulman, has left the Turkish house to which she had been sent by the Governor-General, and gone to that of the Greek Bishop. The Turks seem for the moment to take no further notice of the matter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 273.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, May* 10.)

(No. 22.)

Buda-Pest, May 3, 1877.

Sir,

THE "Pester Lloyd" of to-day, without guaranteeing the accuracy of every word, publishes remarks of Count Andrassy to the Vienna friend of a Hungarian, who congratulated his Excellency on diverting the journey of Thahir Bey with the "Corvina" books, and on suggesting to the Ottoman Government the recall of the Softas.

His Excellency replied that it never occurred to him to say one word against the journey of the Softas, which was a purely private affair, and to which he attached no political importance. He was glad that he had been able to persevere in the policy announced several months ago of maintaining the interests of the Empire, and of not being diverted by demonstration either in one direction or the other. No theories of brotherhood would have any influence upon the policy of the Empire. He considered popularity to be a treasure, not to be hoarded, but to be gathered together to spend for the general welfare. He thought the Hungarian nation had its head cool although its heart was excited; and it would be a symptom of disease, if the heart were sluggish and the head hot.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 274.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, May* 10.)

(No. 23.)

Buda-Pest, May 5, 1877.

Sir,

INTERPELLATIONS have since the reassembling of the Chambers been addressed to the Minister President, inquiring, in presence of the Russian-Turkish war, whether the Hungarian Government held the Treaty of Paris to be in force; whether they would use their influence upon the direction of Foreign Affairs so as to use all the strength of the Empire in any eventuality for the purpose of preventing Russia from acquiring territory from the Ottoman Empire and from bringing the Principalities and Provinces of the Balkan Peninsula under her direct or indirect influence; whether the Government looks indifferently upon the advance of the Russian army and its interference with the free navigation of the Danube and the commerce along the guaranteed neutral Roumania; and whether they have taken steps and will do so to restore the freedom of the Danube, and ward off serious loss to Hungarian interests?

The strong feeling of the House of Deputies against Russia was plainly manifested in the speeches which supported these questions, and the applause which greeted allusions to the disregard of International Law and to Russia's appeal to brute force, and also to the patriotism of Count Andrassy not allowing him to co-operate with Russia. In fact the interpellations represented the almost unanimous determination of the House to oppose Russian views.

Yesterday M. Tisza read a reply, identical in words with that given to the Austrian Diet. His Excellency excluded the question of the navigation of the Danube; and he concluded by saying that the House would see by the statement he had read how carefully the large interests of the Empire were kept in view, and how free the Imperial policy was to act for the best at any moment to guard those interests.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 275.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 424. Confidential.)

Vienna, May 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I PLACED to-day in Count Andrassy's hands your Lordship's despatch to Lord Augustus Loftus in answer to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the $\frac{7th}{19th}$ ultimo.

While reading it his Excellency gave evident signs of satisfaction, and when he had finished he said, that if the circular was to receive an answer at all no other could have been given to it.

As he expressed a wish to have the despatch translated for communication to the Emperor, left a copy of it with him for that purpose.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 276.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 425.)

Vienna, May 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to-day to receive your Lordship's despatch No. 160 of the 3rd instant, transmitting to me a copy of the despatch which you have addressed to Lord Augustus Loftus in reply to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of $\frac{7th}{19th}$ of April, and I have communicated the latter to Count Andrassy.

I also left a copy of it with His Excellency, who requested me to do so, in order that he might have it translated for the information of the Emperor.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 277.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 427.)
Vienna, May 6, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 421 of yesterday's date, I had the honour to report that I had communicated to Baron Orczy the substance of your telegram of the 4th instant, instructing me to acquaint the Government of Austria-Hungary with the readiness of Her Majesty's Government to join in the representations which they have addressed to the Governments of Russia and Turkey, with regard to the future maintenance of the free navigation of the Danube. I have also to-day had some conversation with Count Andrassy upon the subject, when his Excellency stated to me that he would give immediate instructions that the notes which he had addressed upon it to the Russian and Turkish Governments should be communicated to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 278.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 429.)
Vienna, May 6, 1877.

My Lord,

COUNT ANDRASSY informed me to-day that a declaration of the neutrality of Austria-Hungary in the present war was about to be issued, which his Excellency said would be maintained as long as the interests of the monarchy are not compromised by the operations of the belligerents.

It would not be, however, a proclamation by the Emperor, nor a declaration signed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but, as took place during the Franco-German war, it would be issued at Vienna and Buda-Pesth by the Presidents of the respective Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 279.

Baron Orczy to Count Beust.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, May* 10.)

Vienne, ce 6 Mai, 1877.

M. le Comte,

M. L'AMBASSADEUR d'Italie a été chargé par son Gouvernement de nous demander:—

1. Si nous admettrions sans observation les restrictions que le règlement relatif à l'état de siége dont on s'occupe à Constantinople semble devoir apporter aux immunités dont jouissent, d'après les Capitulations, les étrangers en Turquie quant à leur personne et à leur domicile.

2. Si nous admettions sans observation la déclaration de blocus de tout le littoral Russe de la Mer Noire, qui a été communiquée le 4 courant aux Ambassades à Constantinople.

A la première de ces questions j'ai répondu que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi n'avait pas encore connaissance de l'intention de la Sublime Porte de proclamer l'état de siége; mais que si le règlement qui serait publié à ce sujet contenait des restrictions de nature à porter atteinte aux immunités auxquelles le Gouvernement Italien faisait allusion, nous déclarerions ne pas pouvoir les accepter.

Quant à la déclaration du blocus des côtes Russes de la Mer Noire, qui nous a été officiellement communiquée le 4 de ce mois par l'Ambassade de Turquie, j'ai informé M. le Comte de Robilant que le Cabinet Impérial et Royal l'admettait sur la base de la déclaration émise par les Puissances réunis en Congrès à Paris le 16 Avril, 1856.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) ORCZY.

No. 280.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 370.)
Paris, May 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship General Conolly's report of this date, giving an account of the opinions on the present crisis prevalent among officers of the French army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 280.

Major-General Conolly to Lord Lyons.

(Confidential.)
Paris, May 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to submit a brief summary of the views which appear to me to be entertained, upon the present European crisis, by a large majority of the French superior military officers, with whom I am on terms of intimacy.

It is taken for granted that there is a perfect understanding between the Emperors of Russia and Germany, and between their Chancellors Bismarck and Gortchakow.

It is still the intention of Germany to attack France before the latter nation recovers too much strength, and to absorb Holland. In order to make sure that this enterprize may meet with no hindrance, it is most desirable that England, as well as Russia, should have her hands full. Prince Bismarck's chief desire, therefore, now is that England should find serious occupation for her land and sea forces in Turkey, or Egypt, or in both.

Italy is regarded here as quite at the disposal of Germany, so much so, that a claim for the restitution of Nice and Savoy is reckoned a certainty if a German invasion is successful for a week. At the same time a threat from England to act at sea against her shipping and sea-board towns would paralyze Italy at once.

No sensible man conceals from himself the immense difficulty that, under such a state of affairs, will be experienced by France in maintaining the strict neutrality which is now so important to her, and which she so much desires.

What the soundest and really serious portion of the French nation appears to desire is this:—

An alliance offensive and defensive between England, France, Austria, Holland, Belgium and Denmark.

The French consider Austria to be equally threatened with themselves by the Russo-German alliance.

Any trouble about England's occupying, or seizing, part of Egypt, or any other territory on the high road to India, could (I have always thought) be got over by a judicious "management" of the susceptibilities of our friends here, and by more substantial pecuniary arrangements with regard to the Suez Canal.

The Army of Algeria is being raised to its full strength of 60,000 men, in readiness for any complication in the Mediterranean, or for a rising of the Mussulmans.

With all this, it must be borne in mind that there exists a considerable party in France which is inclined towards Russia from gratitude for what that Empire did two years ago to prevent a German invasion. That sentiment, however, is much weakened by the certainty now entertained of a perfect understanding between the two Empires.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES CONOLLY, *Major-General, Military Attaché.*

No. 281.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 371. Confidential.)
Paris, May 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I DESIRE to direct your Lordship's particular attention to the report from General Conolly of this date, which is inclosed in my immediately preceding despatch.

It gives an account of the opinions of officers of the French army upon the present European crisis.

These opinions are not confined to military men. A large portion of the French nation are certainly at this moment of opinion that the safety of France lies in securing the friendship and support of England. They believe that Prince Bismarck is planning a fresh attack upon them, and that with this view he is endeavouring to find occupation for England as well as Russia in the East. They urge that Germany must certainly be aiming at extending its possessions into the West of Europe. In speaking to Englishmen they especially dwell upon Holland, because they believe that an attack by Germany on that country would be especially calculated to arouse indignation in England. They cherish the notion that if they were attacked by Germany, an alliance of England, Austria, and the smaller maritime States, such as Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and even Sweden might be formed to check German aggrandisement.

It is to be remembered, however, that this present state of feeling is produced very much by the belief that it is impossible to detach Russia from Germany; and it cannot be doubted that it would be very much changed if any prospect of obtaining a close alliance with Russia were to appear.

In the meantime the French Government has a somewhat difficult part to play. Its avowed policy is absolute neutrality and complete abstention; and it has to be especially careful not to irritate Germany nor to offend either Russia or England. At this moment, while some members of the Government are believed to incline towards Russia, public opinion is much more disposed to rely upon England.

It would be more satisfactory if the friendly feeling towards England did not derive any of its sustenance from the notion of embroiling her with Germany, and entangling her in a coalition against that Power.

It may, however, be not impossible that the present state of feeling, while it lasts, may facilitate the settlement of some pending questions in a manner advantageous to England and France, and neither offensive nor injurious to any other country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 282.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 10.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 10, 1877, 10.15 A.M.*

GRAND VIZIER informs me that the Russians crossed the Danube yesterday, but not in great force, opposite Galatz, and that they have commenced bombarding Widdin from Kalafat.

No. 283.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 10, 1877, 3·40 P.M.*

YOUR telegram of the 5th instant has been referred to the Board of Admiralty, and they concur with you as to the danger to neutral vessels of a torpedo system of defence. Orders have been given to Admiral Hornby to station an iron-clad at Port Saïd.

No. 284.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 10, 1877, 4·10 P.M.*

Captains M'Calmont, Trotter, and Fife are temporarily attached to Her Majesty's Embassy, and will leave for Constantinople this evening viâ Marseilles.

No. 285.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 10, 5·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, May 10, 1877, 3 P.M.*

COUNT CORTI informs me he is to leave for Constantinople Saturday.

No. 286.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 10.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, May 10, 1877.*

GREEK war-steamer intercepted off Zea a Greek vessel from Phalerium with nineteen brigands and pirates, well supplied with arms, intending to commit depredations in Turkey. All captured and brought to Athens.

No. 287.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 88.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 10, 1877.*

I HAVE received your telegram of the 8th instant, stating that the Porte consents to extend by seven days the time allowed to neutral vessels for entering and leaving the blockaded ports, and I have to instruct you to express to the Porte the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have heard of the attention paid to your Excellency's representations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 288.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 90.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 10, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 4th instant, I have to state to your Excellency that I have also received from the Turkish Ambassador at this Court a copy of the Porte's official notification of the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea.

I have considered the same in communication with the Law Officers of the Crown, and have now to inform you that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the notification is right, provided that the notified blockade can, notwithstanding its extent, be effectually maintained, and provided that it includes no port or coast not belonging to or in possession of the enemy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 289.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 93.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 10, 1877.*

I APPROVE your Excellency's proceedings with regard to the relations between Turkey and Persia, as reported in your despatch No. 358 of the 30th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 290.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 94.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE the language which you employed at your public and private audiences of the Sultan, as reported in your despatches numbered 332 and 333, the latter marked Most Confidential, of the 25th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 291.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 95.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE of your having urged on the Porte the release of the Bulgarian prisoners in the language reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 374 of the 1st instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 292.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 96.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE the language which you used to the Grand Vizier and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on your arrival at Constantinople, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 319 of the 21st ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 293.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 97.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 350, marked Most Confidential, of the 26th ultimo, reporting the course taken by you with the view of preventing the outbreak of war between Russia and Turkey, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government highly approve your efforts to secure peace.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 294.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 98.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE the language employed by your Excellency on the occasion of your reception of the members of the Turkish Government, as reported in your despatch No. 355 of the 28th of April.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 295.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May* 10.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 10 *Mai*, 1877.

POUR faire suite à mon télégramme du 3 Mai, je vous transmets ci-après, pour être communiquée au Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité, la notification officielle qui complète les dispositions précédemment décrétées, relativement au blocus du littoral Russe de la Mer Noire.

Les délais fixés dans l'Article 3 de la notification officielle du 3 Mai, 1877, ont été prolongés de sept jours. Ainsi un délai de dix jours francs, à compter du 5 Mai, N.S., est accordé à tous les navires marchands neutres qui voudraient se rendre dans un des ports du littoral bloqué, et un délai de douze jours à ceux qui voudraient en sortir. Passés ces délais tout bâtiment qui cherchera à entrer dans les eaux investies ou à les quitter sera traité en ennemi.

Pour les navires qui se trouvent dans la Mer d'Azoff ou à Nicolaïeff, ils ne seront pas considérés comme ayant contrevenu au blocus s'il est constaté que leur départ des ports situés dans la Mer d'Azoff ou de Nicolaïeff a été effectué dans le délai de douze jours fixé ci-dessus.

No. 296.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 66.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram of the 5th instant, suggesting that the defence of the Suez Canal by torpedoes might prove dangerous to neutral vessels, and, in reply, I have to inform you that the Admiralty, to whom I forthwith communicated your telegram, concur with you in this view.

I should add that Vice-Admiral Hornby has received orders to station an iron-clad at Port Said.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 297.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 185.) *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1877.

My Lord,

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration a question which has been raised as to the liability to seizure and condemnation as contraband of war of coal carried in a neutral merchant-vessel and destined for the use of a British ship of war lying in a belligerent port, and they are advised by the Law Officers of the Crown that coal would not, under such circumstances, be liable to confiscation as contraband of war.

It is evident, however, that a belligerent cruizer would have a right, in the event of coal being declared by Russia to be under certain circumstances contraband of war, to require some evidence of the destination and intended use of coal found on board a neutral vessel bound for an enemy's port, and if there exists any reasonable grounds for suspicion that the coal is destined for the use of the enemy, the cruizer would have the right to detain the vessel until a Prize Court adjudicates upon the cargo.

It appears, therefore, desirable to enter into some arrangement with the belligerent Powers, by which satisfactory proof may be given in such cases that the coal cargo is destined for the use of Her Majesty's ships of war; and I have accordingly to instruct you to propose to the Russian Government that a certificate from the Admiralty, with the signature certified by the Russian Representative in London, to the effect that the cargo referred to (the shipping documents being attached) is the property of Her Majesty's Government or is destined for delivery to Her Majesty's Government under contract, should be accepted by the officers in command of Russian cruizers as conclusive evidence of its innocent destination, so as to relieve such cargo from seizure.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 298.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 70. Confidential.)

Athens, May 2, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to inclose a portion of a subsequent number of the "Messager d'Athènes," containing another article respecting the injustice of the Great Powers towards the Hellenic Provinces of Turkey at the Constantinople Conferences, and urging the necessity of now obtaining guarantees for the concession to those provinces of any privileges which the course of events may oblige the Porte to concede to its Slavonic subjects.

Subjoined to this article is a statement to the effect that I am reported to have made energetic representations with respect to the armaments of Greece.

I need scarcely assure your Lordship that there is no foundation for such a report, and that there is great exaggeration in the statement that I and my German and Austrian-Hungarian colleagues had last year promised that the Hellenic populations would, if they maintained a pacific attitude, obtain their full share of any concessions which might be made to the Slavs.

The extent to which I went in my conversations with the Hellenic Minister for Foreign Affairs, when the question of the claims of the Hellenic Provinces to the consideration of the European Powers was brought forward, is recorded in my despatches No. 101, Confidential, of May 18, and No. 262, Confidential, of October 26, 1876, and I do not believe that either of my colleagues went further in the sense indicated.

The remainder of the portion of the "Messager," which I inclose, contains summaries of articles from other Greek newspapers, showing the state of public feeling with respect to the war between Russia and Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure in No. 298.

Extract from "Le Messager d'Athènes," of April 28, 1877.

DANS notre dernier numéro nous nous sommes efforcés de saisir, au milieu de fluctuations actuelles de l'opinion, la pensée dominante de la nationalité Hellénique. Le seul mérite de notre article était de répondre purement et simplement au désir général, de dissiper les illusions que l'on pouvait nourrir encore sur l'attitude des Hellènes devant les événements qui se préparent en Orient.

Si la Grèce ne s'est pas écartée un instant de la voie où elle s'est engagée depuis le commencement de la crise Orientale, c'est qu'elle avait confiance dans la justice de la cause de Grecs de Turquie, objet de ses légitimes et inquiètes préoccupations, et dans les déclarations des Puissances. On se souvient, en effet, que leurs Représentants, les Ministres d'Angleterre, d'Allemagne et d'Autriche-Hongrie notamment, recommendaient au Cabinet d'Athènes d'user de son influence sur les Grecs de l'Empire Ottoman pour les engager à rester tranquilles en lui donnant l'assurance qu'ils obtiendraient les mêmes avantages que les Slaves lors du règlement des affaires d'Orient. On sait comment cette promesse a été tenue. Pendant les délibérations de la Conférence, aucune voix, pas même celle de l'Angleterre, qui s'était engagée plus avant que les autres envers la Grèce officielle, ne s'est levée pour défendre les intérêts des Grecs de la Thrace et de la Macédoine que le Général Ignatieff voulait comprendre dans les limites de la Bulgarie, et la question Grecque a été écartée à l'unanimité des voix comme si la Turquie n'était habitée que par des Bulgares et des Monténégrins. Les délégués de l'Europe auraient probablement tenu un autre langage si la Crète, l'Epire, la Thessalie et la Macédoine s'étaient insurgées aussi contre la domination des Osmanlis.

On comprend maintenant que le Cabinet d'Athènes soit devenu aussi méfiant envers les Puissances que les Grecs de Turquie à l'endroit des exhortations du Cabinet d'Athènes. Tous nos efforts n'avaient qu'un but, maintenir l'équilibre qui existe en Orient entre les Slaves et les Hellènes. Or, par une fatalité inexplicable, l'Europe occidentale, non moins intéressée que nous au maintien de cet équilibre, a autorisé en quelque sorte la Russie à le détruire au profit des Slaves. C'est contre cette résolution, qui n'est pas, heureusement, irrévocable, qu'il importe de réagir aujourd'hui. Les Hellènes, avons-nous dit dans notre dernier numéro, ne songent pas à créer des embarras à la Porte; ils tiendront compte des

exhortations pacifiques des Grandes Puissances, mais à la condition que les Grecs de la Turquie obtiendront, à la fin de la guerre, les mêmes avantages que les Slaves. C'est là une des conditions qu'ils mettront à leur neutralité pour peu que la lutte se prolonge sur le Danube.

Il n'y a là rien d'exhorbitant, rien qui puisse donner lieu à la moindre remontrance de la part de l'Europe. Si le Cabinet d'Athènes ne pouvait obtenir ces minces avantages pour les Grecs de la Turquie, il se verrait fatalement débordé par l'opinion et, comme cela est toujours arrivé depuis quarante ans, ce seraient les comités qui se mettraient à la tête du mouvement Hellénique en Orient. L'Europe, la Turquie et la Grèce libre elle-même ont le plus grand intérêt à prévenir une pareille éventualité.

Une chose dont les Puissances ne tiennent pas assez compte dans leurs exhortations au Gouvernement Hellénique, c'est que la Grèce est l'œuvre commune de tous les Hellènes et que l'on compte à Athènes, dans toutes les classes de la société, plus d'habitants originaires des Provinces Grecques de la Turquie que de la Grèce libre. Est-il étonnant que ces hommes, et leurs compatriotes établis dans toutes les grandes villes de l'Europe, s'agitent pour retrouver la patrie perdue? Et ce qu'ils craignent le plus aujourd'hui, hâtons-nous de le dire, ce n'est pas la prolongation de la domination Ottomane, mais la crainte de tomber sous un joug plus lourd et plus odieux. Les rassurer contre cette éventualité, c'est le seul, l'unique moyen de leur faire écouter les conseils du Gouvernement Hellénique.

On affirme, que M. Stuart, Ministre d'Angleterre à Athènes, a fait des représentations énergiques sur les armements de la Grèce. Nous ne sommes pas plus en mesure de démentir que de confirmer cette nouvelle, mais nous n'hésitons pas à déclarer que le Gouvernement Hellénique ne doit prendre conseil que de ses intérêts et n'ajouter qu'une foi médiocre aux déclarations des Puissances étrangères.

L'Angleterre, l'Allemagne, et l'Autriche-Hongrie n'ont-elles pas écarté, le moment venu, la question Grecque des délibérations de la Conférence? Pourtant, leurs Ministres à Athènes avaient donné, de la part de leurs Gouvernements respectifs, l'assurance que les Grecs de la Turquie obtiendraient, s'ils ne se livraient à des mouvements de nature à compliquer la situation, les mêmes avantages que les Slaves. On sait comment ils ont tenu parole.

NOUVELLES DES PROVINCES GRECQUES DE TURQUIE.

On nous écrit de la Canée que l'Assemblée Générale de l'Ile de Crète est convoquée pour le 1er Mai. L'ordonnance de Convocation a beaucoup contribué à calmer les esprits. Les Crétois espèrent que la Porte finira par accepter les modifications proposées l'année dernière à la Loi Organique qui seront renouvelées dans cette session par les représentants Chrétiens de l'Ile. C'est le meilleur, l'unique moyen peut-être de prévenir une insurrection.

Nos lettres de Salonique et de Janina parlent de l'activité déployée par les Turcs pour subvenir aux besoins de leurs troupes et pour préparer les renforts qui seront envoyés à l'armée du Danube.

D'un autre côté, les populations Helléniques voient avec une inquiétude toujours croissante l'approche de la guerre. Leur attitude est parfaitement correcte. Ils ne donnent aucun motif de mécontentement aux autorités Ottomanes, mais paraissent fermement résolues à défendre les droits de leur nationalité dans le cas où les événements qui vont avoir lieu sur le Danube provoqueraient un changement radical dans les relations qui existent aujourd'hui entre les Chrétiens et les Turcs.

Les lettres que nous recevons de la Macédoine expriment les mêmes sentiments. Les Grecs de cette province, dont l'existence nationale est directement menacée par les prétentions des Panslavistes, ne se résigneront jamais, quoiqu'il arrive, à subir la domination des Bulgares. Si, par impossible, une pareille éventualité venait jamais à se réaliser, il faudrait faire occuper par une armée étrangère, les pays Grecs que l'on placerait, au mépris de tous les droits et des intérêts bien entendus de l'Europe occidentale et de la civilisation, sous le joug d'une nation en tout inférieure aux Hellènes.

Les Albanais Orthodoxes, qui ont fait, de tout temps, cause commune avec les Hellènes, suivront, selon toute les probabilités, la même conduite que leurs voisins de l'Epire avec lesquels ils commencent à s'identifier.

No. 299.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 52. Political.) *Belgrade, May* 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 19 of the 17th ultimo, instructing me to urge M. Ristich to use his influence to prevent the continuance of the insurrectionary warfare which is inflicting so much suffering in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I have the honour to report that I called on M. Ristich to-day and communicated to him your Lordship's wishes.

M. Ristich informed me that he quite shared your Lordship's views, and that for some time past he had put a stop to the enlistment of volunteers for Bosnia, though he confessed such an expedient would not have been adopted by him had there been a fair prospect of a satisfactory solution being attained by keeping the insurrection alive, and argued that it was absurd to imagine that the revolutionary bands now in Bosnia, who were causing so much useless suffering to the inhabitants, could succeed in effecting what Servia and Montenegro together failed to accomplish.

As a proof of the sincerity of his statement M. Ristich showed me a petition addressed to him by Bosnian refugees in Servia, containing a request that the subscribers, numbering several hundreds, might be allowed to cross the frontier to take part in the insurrection.

The petition, it appears, was submitted to the Council of Ministers, who, M. Ristich said, decided that it should be refused.

A reply to that effect—which I have seen—was accordingly sent to the petitioners.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 300.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May* 11.)

Constantinople, le 10 *Mai*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

C'EST avec un véritable sentiment de gratitude que nous avons lu la depêche adressée par Lord Derby à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique à St. Pétersbourg en réponse à la dernière Circulaire du Prince Gortchakow. Cet admirable document, qui émane d'une si grande autorité, rétablit la situation sous son vrai jour avec une vigueur de logique incomparable, et démontre les sentiments de bienveillance dont nous sommes heureux de voir le Gouvernement Anglais animé à l'égard de notre pays.

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, sous les yeux duquel je me suis empressé de placer cette dépêche, a bien voulu charger le chef de sa maison militaire, le Général Said Pacha, de se rendre chez l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique pour faire parvenir par le canal de son Excellence l'expression de sa vive satisfaction au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Votre Excellence voudra bien, de son côté, exprimer à l'éminent homme d'Etat qui est à la tête du Foreign Office la reconnaissance du Gouvernement Impérial et de toute la nation Ottomane.

No. 301.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 11.)

Tiflis, May 10, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TSCHENZES south of Grosnaya revolted; (parties?) of these attacked a Russian fort, but were beaten off. Despatch No. 69 sent.

No. 302.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 11.)

Therapia, May 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Captain Musgrave, dated yesterday:—

"It is not true that the Russians crossed the Danube. The Governor was my authority."

No. 303.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1877, 3·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

HAS the manifesto referred to in your telegram of 25th ultimo, respecting Russian subjects and vessels, and commerce of neutrals, been issued?

No. 304.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1877, 3·55 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

HAS the decision of the Egyptian Government respecting Suez Canal, referred to in your telegram of 4th instant, been approved by Porte and officially notified?

No. 305.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Berlin correspondent of the "Times" to-day telegraphs that there has been a correspondence between the editor of the "Ruski-Mir" and Colonel Wellesley respecting an assertion in the "Ruski-Mir" that immediately before the Russian declaration of war Lord Beaconsfield expressed his conviction, founded on reports from Colonel Wellesley, that Russia could not go to war.

This statement is entirely without foundation, and Her Majesty's Government wish you to make this known to the Russian Government.

No. 306.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1877, 6 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

ITALIAN Consul at Jerusalem reports apprehension on the part of Europeans there and throughout Palestine as to weakness of garrison and risk of disorders. They fear that troops will be removed and only local militia left. Bedouins are said to be threatening the country.

Italian Government wish us to join in common representation to the Porte.

Let me know if you think position of affairs in Palestine corresponds with this account. Should Consul Moore's reports lead you to think danger imminent, represent to the Porte the necessity of taking measures for security of life and property.

No. 307.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 11, 1877, 5 P.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of 9th instant Porte yesterday addressed a telegram to Serdar Ekrem, directing him to allow English tugs and lighters now in the Danube to ascend the river if possible into Austrian waters. He is to make arrangements with Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk. With this object I have telegraphed in this sense to Mr. Reade.

No. 308.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 11, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of 5th instant Porte informed Imperial Ministry of Marine, on the 7th instant, that the Indo-European telegraph line from Kertch to Persian frontier was not a submarine cable, and the Ministry will issue instructions in order to avoid any misunderstanding in this respect.

No. 309.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 11, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegrams of 8th and 9th instant, Porte has decided that vessels at Azoff or Nicolaiew may leave those ports up to the 17th instant inclusive, and shall then be considered to be on their voyage so that they may pass the Straits of Kertch or Ochakoff after the term of delay has expired. Their papers, however, must prove that they quitted those ports within the time specified.

No. 310.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 11, 1877, 7 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 53, Porte has communicated the following official notification relating to blockade of Russian ports in Black Sea:—

"The delay fixed by Article 3 of the Official Notice of May 3, 1877, is prolonged seven days. A delay of ten full days, reckoning from May 5, N.S., is granted to all vessels wishing to enter blockaded ports, and delay of twelve days to those wishing to leave. At the expiration of this delay, all ships attempting either to enter or leave blockaded waters will be treated as enemies. Ships now in the Sea of Azoff or at Nicolaieff will not be considered as infringing the blockade if it is proved that they sailed hence during the delay of twelve days at present granted."

No. 311.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 11, 1877, 7·45 P.M.*

SULTAN has sent Said Pasha, the Chief of his Military Household, to request me to convey to the Queen and Her Majesty's Government the expression of his deep gratitude for the answer returned by Her Majesty's Government to Prince Gortchakow's Circular. His Majesty begs me to say that he and his people feel most deeply the justice done by the Queen and Her Majesty's Government to them.

No. 312.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 191.) *Foreign Office, May 11, 1877.*

Sir,

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and told me that the Italian Consul at Jerusalem had represented to his Government the fear of the Europeans there and in Palestine generally, as to the weakness of the garrison and the consequent risk of disorders. It is apprehended that the troops are about to be removed and that only the local militia will be kept. The Bedouins, General Menabrea said, are threatening the country, and the Italian Government are anxious that Her Majesty's Government should join them in a common representation to the Porte, on the necessity of making proper provision for the security of life and property.

I told his Excellency that I had not heard anything that would lead me to think the danger as imminent as was represented by the Italian Consul. I said, however, that I would communicate with Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and would instruct him to make representations to the Turkish Government if he thought that the reports received by him from Syria called for such a step.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 313.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 182. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, May 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon to take leave, being about, as he said, to return to Russia with the view of obtaining a clearer idea than he had at present as to the feelings and intentions of his Government. He told me that his absence would not exceed twenty-five days at the utmost, and after some general comments upon the situation he expressed an earnest hope that no step of a decisive character would be taken by Her Majesty's Government pending the explanations which he hoped to be able to supply.

I asked Count Schouvaloff what he meant by a decisive step.

His Excellency replied that he referred to such measures as the putting of the British army on a war footing or the sending of our fleet up to the Dardanelles.

I told his Excellency that I could make no promise on such a subject, and, indeed, he had not asked me for one, but that I thought it in the highest degree improbable that either of the steps to which he had referred would be taken.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 314.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 184.) *Foreign Office, May 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE "Times" of to-day publishes a telegram from its Berlin correspondent stating that a correspondence has taken place between the editor of the "Ruski Mir" and Colonel Wellesley, respecting a statement which has appeared in the "Ruski Mir," that Lord Beaconsfield had, immediately before the Russian declaration of war, expressed his conviction, founded upon Colonel Wellesley's reports, that Russia would not go to war.

I have to inform you that the statement in question is entirely without foundation, and Her Majesty's Government wish you to make a communication to that effect to the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 314.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 101.)
Foreign Office, May 11, 1877.

Sir,

THE Italian Ambassador in this country informs me that the Italian Consul at Jerusalem reports that much alarm exists amongst Europeans in that city and elsewhere throughout Palestine owing to the weakness of the garrison, and the risk of disturbances. It is said that the Bedouins have assumed a threatening attitude, while it is feared that the regular troops will be removed, and that the duty of maintaining order will devolve on the local militia.

Under these circumstances the Italian Government are anxious that Her Majesty's Government should join with them in making a representation to the Porte.

I have to request that you will inform me whether, in your opinion, the state of affairs is as serious as is thus represented; and should the reports which you have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem lead you to believe that there is imminent danger, you will call the Porte's attention to the necessity of taking precautionary measures for the protection of life and property.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 315.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, May 11, 1877, 10·45 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Erzeroom, dated yesterday:—

"Russian right wing occupies Gaisman. Left wing working round by Aintab, probably with the object of turning Delibaba and entering pass in the plain.

"Letters of 6th May from Kars state that Russians hold positions around fortress from nine to fifteen miles distant. Several outpost skirmishes of no importance. Provisions already getting dear. Government reports action in Ardahan, resulting in preventing Russians bridging a stream. Kurds continue promising, but do not come forward. Circassians here get insubordinate, making demands Government cannot meet. Difficulty will be encountered in getting them to advance if not paid."

No. 316.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 25. Political.)
Erzeroom, April 18, 1877.

My Lord,

THE poverty of the Government commences to be severely felt here by the authorities. Hitherto the yield from taxation, the voluntary contributions, and the paper money, have enabled the civil and military administrations to meet pressing demands, but as all these sources are now exhausted, the authorities are driven to every kind of device to obtain means to enable the battalions to march to the front, and daily the difficulty is becoming greater; and so low are the civil and military chests, that for several days past the nightly balance has not exceeded 30*l.*

The possibility of paying the troops or the civil employés is no longer thought of, and much misery is the consequence. Numbers of soldiers are obliged to go from house to house begging for money, clothes, and even for food, while the wives and daughters of very many who are on the frontier are compelled to barter their honour to gain a little money to enable them to live.

The Governor-General has been trying to induce some of the wealthier Christians to lend money to the Government, but all plead inability, and show that the Government has taken all but their credit from them.

It is very probable that the authorities will be compelled to levy a contribution on all the people, for, without resorting to some such device, it will be impossible to keep the army together much longer.

What the result of such an act will be it is not easy to say.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 317.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 28. Political.)
Erzeroom, April 19, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 25, Political, of the 18th instant, I have further to state that Ahmet Muhktar Pasha, who left this for Kars on the 16th instant, tried to collect 1,500*l.* Turkish to take with him for the troops on the frontier, but was unable to do so, and had to leave without taking any money. The Governor-General has since been working hard to collect this sum, and he has at last succeeded, and the money will leave to-day.

Borrowing, however, has had to be resorted to.

I am told that the authorities have for a month past been daily telegraphing to Constantinople begging for remittances, but the Porte either has no money to send, or will not send, for none comes, and the authorities are directed to draw on the revenues of Van, Diarbekir and other provinces, which appear to be as poor as Erzeroom.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 318.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 9. Political.)
Trebizond, April 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Mehmed Pasha, the first Aide-de-camp of the Sultan, passed here last week on his way to Erzeroom and Kars, with the mission to inspect and report, for the personal information of his master, on the condition of those places.

Mehmed Pasha, before his departure, which took place on the 21st instant, called at the residence, and in the presence of the Governor-General, the leading men among the population, whether Mussulmans or Christians, and told them that he was specially instructed by the Sultan to recommend them to live together on the best terms of cordiality and friendship, and to unite their energies in order to resist the enemies of the Empire. It would seem that his recommendation to live on good terms with their neighbours, which was especially addressed to the Mussulmans, has produced a favourable impression on the Christians of this town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 319.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 12. Political.)
Trebizond, April 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Deputies of this province, whose election had not been validated until now in consequence of a series of irregularities on the part of the electors, leave, at last, this day for Constantinople.

There are two Mussulmans and one Christian.

One of the Mussulmans, Ali Effendi, is the President of the Municipal Council, and is considered by nearly all parties as being a person of ability, of sound judgment, and even of liberal ideas.

The other Mussulman is a merchant, and a member of the Tribunal of Commerce, named Hadji Emin Effendi. He is considered to be a man of capacity, but, even by Mussulmans, as not having a character of perfect integrity, while the Christians pronounce him to be rather fanatical.

The Christian Deputy is a Greek, named Giorgi Carvounidi, and one of the leading members of that community. He is the Greek representative in the Administrative Council, and has a very high opinion of himself; but I think that it might have been

possible to find a fitter person among the Greeks, who, however, seem to be satisfied with the choice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

April 28.

P.S.—The departure of the Deputies has been postponed to this day, and a sudden indisposition prevents the Greek from embarking.

A. B.

No. 320.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 30. Political.)
Beyrout, April 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the departure of the Russian Consul-General from Beyrout, and the announcement of the rupture of diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 320.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, April 29, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Petcovitch, the Russian Consul-General in Syria, left Beyrout for Alexandria on the 27th instant, having announced the rupture of diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey to his colleagues by a circular dated the 24th instance. No demonstration or disturbance occurred on the occasion of his departure, and the various Vice-Consuls on the coast within my jurisdiction have reported to me that announcement of the rupture has not caused any demonstrations, nor has public tranquillity been anywhere disturbed, though, not unnaturally, the declaration of war has created great excitement among all classes of the population, and in some places, especially Acre, a panic amongst the Christians, who fear ill-treatment from the more fanatical of their Mussulman neighbours, but I trust their fears are groundless if the authorities will only perform their duty in preserving order.

At Beyrout we are especially fortunate to have at the present time so enlightened, active, and just a man for Mutaseriff as Raef Effendi, our present Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 321.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 8. Political.)
Damascus, April 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that on the 26th instant the news of the declaration of war by Russia was made publicly known by the local authorities to the assembled spiritual chiefs of the Moslem and non-Moslem communities, whose prayers for the success of the Imperial arms were requested, as well as the exercise of their best endeavours to promote harmony among all sects of the population.

The news was received with great dismay by all, as in view of the sufferings which recent events have entailed on Damascus, the people had clung to the last to the hope of a pacific solution.

Among the Christians and Jews the extinction of any prospect of a speedy relief from the commercial and financial ruin which has of late overtaken them, almost without a

single exception, has been lost sight of in the fears, accelerated by the sad remembrances of the massacre of 1860, of fanatical outbreak of their Moslem brethren, and which tend to degenerate into panic on the slightest occasion. Those who could afford it have long left the city, and should a reverse attend the Imperial arms many more will doubtless leave for Beyrout and the Lebanon. Already a few are secretly quitting.

The Moslem element of the population, which has suffered even more than the non-Moslem by the decay and stagnation which reign on all sides, but principally by the drain of bread-winners for military service and by the pressure of the tax-gatherer, both in the urban and rural districts, is in a pitiable condition, and, indeed, I find it difficult to convey an idea of the suffering which prevails and of the state of semi-starvation of the large majority of the people. Their spirit seems to be crushed by their heavy burdens and by the now certain prospect that they have not yet seen the worst.

Having visited some of those few Moslems who, the remnants of that powerful class of Damascene Effendis which the pecuniary chastisement inflicted for alleged complicity in the events of 1860 well nigh blotted out, are still looked upon as the leaders of the people, I received assurances that the bitter recollection of 1860 and the ruin thereby wrought upon the city, were not forgotten, and that as governmental incitement to sectarian disorders (generally believed in as regards 1860) was now out of the question, no fears of a general rising against the non-Moslem population need be apprehended, although petty troubles, arising out of the great ignorance and distress of the lower classes, might take place.

Meanwhile perfect tranquillity prevails; no outburst of fanatical feeling has taken place, and the authorities, both civil and military, seem alive to the responsibility of their position in regard to the preservation of public order.

Although the want of any sympathy with the Government is but too general and apparent among all classes of the native Moslems, the common bond of religion shows itself among the educated and thinking men, in spite of this antipathy, in the fear of Russia's military ascendancy in the coming struggle, and in the constant inquiry and fervent hope that England may yet succour Turkey in her need.

Having lately returned from a journey through a portion of the Hauran, the upper valley of the Jordan, and Mount Hermon, I was much struck by the seeming want of any kind of authority, and, under the present circumstances of great distress, the singular absence of serious crime.

In fact the country seems to take care of itself, and to be kept in order solely by the reluctance of any one of the numerous sects to begin disturbances, the end of which cannot be foreseen. And although the oppression of the weak by the strong is far from absent, and isolated cases of robbery are perhaps more frequent than before, the great innate disinclination to create blood feuds prevents the commission of more serious crimes.

In the Hauran, for instance, the few Christian and Moslem villages owe their existence to a judicious understanding with the Arabs and Druses among whom their lot is cast,—with the former by payment of black-mail, and with the latter by seeking their patronage and protection. And although they are both equally exposed to the exactions of the tax-gatherer and rural police, the Christians, by superior address and by the influence in Damascus of their coreligionists, come better out of the struggle than their Moslem brethren, whose situation is deplorable.

At Kuneitrah, overhanging the Jordan valley on the east, a colony of some 400 Circassians, drawn three years since from Sivas, in Asia Minor, is located, occupying itself in pastoral pursuits. Cultivation of the land on any scale by them is prevented by the claims of the Arabs to the grassy uplands around as their rightful inheritance. The colonists are kept in order by well understanding that they are regarded as strangers and interlopers by the natives, and are thus loth to assert their position more than is absolutely necessary for their existence.

From Kuneitrah to the Jordan valley the sparse population is a motley mixture of Druze, Christian, Nusairey, and Moslem, orthodox and heterodox. Here every man looks out for himself, and never trusts himself alone or unarmed.

The powerful Druze Chiefs of the Hauran and Hermon whom I had lately seen in Damascus, or who called upon me when passing their homes, assured me that a keen recollection of the events of 1860 would, if nothing else, prevent them from fomenting disturbances which they well knew by sad experience would only lead to their disadvantage; and that the Christians had absolutely nothing to fear. And although I found that the Christians of Hasbeya and Rasheya were much exercised by their fears of their ancient foes, I failed to discover that the existing uneasiness arose from any other cause than vague and exaggerated alarms produced by present political events and by past recollections. It is true I discovered two or three instances where Druzes, working upon the fears

of the Christians, had raked up and pressed with success old claims long since cancelled, but nothing of more importance.

The Druzes, the all-powerful and dominant element in these districts, is to all practical intents independent, and settles his private affairs and quarrels after his own fashion; and even in the populous mixed villages of Hermon, where the Government makes some show at least of authority, the Turkish Governors are chary of making bad blood with a people who, whatever be their private feuds, unite as one man when their common interests are threatened or assailed.

As the Sheiks everywhere still profess much veneration for and gratitude to the English Government, I did not fail to impress upon them the great responsibility they would incur if in these critical times any act of theirs should conduce to oppress the Christians or to breed disturbances; and, so far as assurances and promises could go, and which I believe to be sincere, nothing was left to be desired.

Opposition to the ever-increasing exactions of the Government in taxes and conscription is openly spoken of in some of the outlying districts inhabited by Metualis; and in the Kaïmakamlik of Ajeloon, the people lately flatly refused to pay the large "jané" or forced loan sought to be imposed upon them, and the Governor has in consequence withdrawn to Damascus.

The Government does not seem inclined to push matters to extremities.

In conclusion, I would venture to state the opinion I have formed that the strong conviction of the Moslem and Druze leaders that the events of 1860 were brought about solely by Government agency, to the common ruin of the parties immediately concerned, will be found to act as a great moral deterrent to sectarian outbreak or disturbances at the present time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 322.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 4. Political.)
Adrianople, April 29, 1877.

My Lord,

THE inclosed despatches from Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis and Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert report the representations which these gentlemen have addressed to the authorities in respect of grievances complained of by Bulgarians in their respective districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 322.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, April 27, 1877.

Sir,

IT having been reported to me by Bozanoglu Gelo, a Christian of the village of Karapili, while on my mission of inquiry into the late outrage at Obroukli, that he had been severely beaten and robbed of 300 piastres in Kaimés by Kued Mehemet Aga, a zaptieh stationed at Obroukli, I immediately, on my return to Adrianople, addressed a letter (copy of which I inclose) to the Christian Musteshar, in the absence of the Governor-General, on the subject, and requested him to inquire into the matter.

I have since been informed that Kued Mehemet Aga has been removed from that village, and that Bozanoglu Gelo has obtained restitution of his property.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 322.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Ohannis Effendi.

Adrianople, le 11 *Avril*, 1877.

Excellence,

LE sujet Ottoman Bozanoglu Gelo, du village de Karapili, dans le Nahié d'Usgadar, m'ayant porté plainte contre le zaptieh Kued Mehemet Aga, de station à Obroukli, village dans le dit nahié, que celui-ci lui avait enlevé, le 20–1 courant, par force et à coup de bâton, 300 piastres en Kaimés, c'est pourquoi j'aime à croire que votre Excellence donnera sur le champ les ordres nécessaires pour que les deux parties soient cité à Andrinople et cette affaire, si indigne d'un militaire au service de Sa Majesté le Sultan, soit examiné et jugé.

(Signé) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 322.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Vice-Consul Dupuis.

Philipoppoli, April 24, 1877.

Sir,

IT has come to my knowledge that the tax-gatherers of Ihtiman and Samakow are, or were quite lately, demanding bedels (military exemption tax), and beylik (sheep tax) for last year from the inhabitants of Mohowo, a village in the Sandjack of Sofia, which was partly burnt, and suffered greatly in other ways during the events of last May.

This is a breach of the injunctions issued by the Porte, and as the authorities here have no jurisdiction over Mohowo, I beg to recommend the case to your attention, in the hope that the superior authorities at Adrianople may be induced by such representations as you may deem proper to put a stop to the arbitrary proceedings above stated.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 4 in No. 322.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Ali Pasha.

Adrianople, le 26 *Avril*, 1877.

Excellence,

LE Vice-Consul Britannique à Philippopoli vient de porter à ma connaissance que les Domicis d'Ihtiman et de Samakow ont insisté dernièrement pour que les habitants de Mohowo, village dans le Sandjak de Sofia qui avait beaucoup suffert pendant les événements du mois de Mai passé, paient les impôts du bedel et le beylik de l'année passée.

Croyant que l'imposition de ces taxes est une infraction aux injonctions de la Sublime Porte, et voyant que les autorités de Philippopoli ne sont pas compétents d'y intervenir, c'est pourquoi je recommende cette affaire à la considération bienveillante de votre Excellence afin que vous vouliez donner les ordres nécessaires de faire cesser ces abus.

(Signé) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 323.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 5. Political.)
Adrianople, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I VERY much regret to have to inform your Lordship that a shocking outrage is reported to have been perpetrated about two weeks ago by Bulgarians, it is said, in the district of Kizil-Agatch, in this province. The bodies of three Turks have been discovered in the vicinity of the village of Derbend with their tongues and hands cut off, and otherwise horribly mutilated.

The authors of this triple murder have not yet been discovered.

It is suspected that Slav emissaries are abroad trying to instigate acts of this nature with a view to excite the fanaticism of the Turks, and to foment disturbances.

I am taking measures to ascertain the facts of these outrages, and whether there are any grounds for attributing them to political designs.

It is also reported that on the 28th instant a party of three Circassians waylaid and

robbed five Christians on the highway, about four hours distance from this town, and also killed a Greek Albanian Bektchi ("garde champêtre") who tried to protect these Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 324.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 6. Political.)
Adrianople, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose Mr. Dupuis' report on the outrage mentioned in my telegram of the 27th ultimo to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, a copy of which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 2 of the same date. The victims in this instance were not killed, but only wounded and robbed.

I have pleasure in reporting to your Lordship the successful measures taken by the Pasha of Adrianople against the perpetrators of another act of brigandage.

About fifteen days ago one Voulko Kehaya, the Bulgarian Primate of Pounar-hissar, eighteen hours from Adrianople, was carried off by a party of brigands, and held to ransom. His family, being unable to collect the sum demanded—5,000 piastres—he remained a captive with the robbers.

In the meanwhile the Pasha, being apprised of the facts, sent a police force in pursuit. Within a week they came up with the brigands, killed one of their number, and succeeded in capturing two others, who were wounded in the fray. These proved to be Turks. The captive Voulko was not with them; but a few days ago he unexpectedly arrived safe at home. He reports that he made his escape from another party of three belonging to the same band, and who are Bulgarians.

These are now being pursued by the police, which appears to be showing a certain activity against evil-doers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 324.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, April 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have just returned from visiting the scene of another outrage, perpetrated by Circassians.

On the 23rd of this month three Bulgarians, Stoyanoglo Kotcho, Ghiozoglo Costa, and Ivanoglo Tcherno, all of the village of Obroukli, while peaceably returning to their village, after selling in Adrianople some farm produce, were waylaid near the village of Iskudur, in the district of Adrianople, by two Circassian bandits, believed to belong to the village of Hadiraga, who demanded money of them; and on their pleading that they were poor men, and had none, they were fired at several times. Stoyanoglo Kotcha was hit in the stomach, and afterwards plundered of 25 piastres, and his horse wounded.

Ivanoglo Tcherno was hit in the ankle, and also plundered of 150 piastres.

Giozoglo Costa, although fired at, was not hit; he made his escape, and gave notice of the occurrence to the authorities.

Diligent inquiries are being made throughout the district; but up to this date the culprits have not been discovered.

The wounded men are now in the Greek hospital in this city, and are progressing favourably.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 325.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 39. Political.)
Scutari, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that, yesterday afternoon, the Mirdite Chief Capitan Marco and about sixty other Mirdites were brought into Scutari under the escort of a battalion of Redifs, and were immediately lodged in the common prison of the place.

Capitan Marco has, all through the Mirdite misunderstanding, professed himself an adherent of the Turkish Government, and it was for him that I obtained the safe-conduct from the local authorities reported in my despatch No. 3, Political, of the 3rd February last. He says he was unable to benefit by the favour I had secured for him, as he was kept a close prisoner at Orosci by Prenk Bib Doda.

The treatment now bestowed on Capitan Marco and his companions will not encourage the remaining Mirdite Chiefs to place themselves in the power of the local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 326.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 11.)
Sulina, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

IN explanation of my telegram of yesterday, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I started from Galatz on the 27th April with the new French Commissioner, M. Herbette, in order to make him acquainted with our various works and establishments in the Lower Danube.

We arrived here next day, and in the evening received telegraphic information that the Russian military authorities had prohibited, at a few hours' notice, the navigation of the river.

Previous to leaving Galatz, we received an intimation that such prohibition was to be shortly expected, but did not suppose that it would be so abrupt as to cut us off from Galatz during the short time we proposed to be absent.

On the arrival here of the French mail-boat on the following day, finding that no steps appeared to have been taken to facilitate our return, and telegraphic communication being cut off between Toultcha and Galatz, M. Herbette telegraphed viâ Constantinople to his Government, to procure safe-conducts from the Russians for our return.

As it has happened, however, our arrival at Sulina has been most fortunate, and our presence here is very necessary, at least, until the shipping shall have cleared out of the harbour, and that matters shall have settled down more quietly.

We propose, therefore, even in the event of a safe conduct reaching us, only to take advantage of it when we consider that our presence is no longer necessary, as, in the event of further difficulties, on account of the progress of hostilities up the river, we can always profit by it to return to Galatz viâ Odessa.

Of course, under these circumstances, the half-yearly meeting of the Commission fixed for the 7th instant, will have to be postponed for the present.

Amongst other temporary measures adopted by us, we have effected an arrangement with Hobart Pasha, whom we found here on our arrival, for preventing misunderstandings between the Turkish naval and our harbour authorities, so as to maintain our separate jurisdiction, and to avoid all infraction of our neutrality. We have issued regulations to meet the cases of vessels bound to the upper river ports, and entering Sulina in ignorance of the stoppage of the river navigation, in order to prevent their subjecting themselves unnecessarily to payment of the Sulina dues. We also issue notices when any information is received respecting the extinguishing of lights, or other facts of importance to the navigation.

I take the opportunity of the last Austrian Lloyd boat leaving to-day to send this letter viâ Constantinople, and it is probable that in a few days we shall be shut out from all except chance communication by Turkish men-of-war.

Her Majesty's ship "Cockatrice" is here, and her presence is very useful both for Commission and English interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE.

P.S.—The Lloyd boat has just brought down information from the Consuls at Toultcha that the Governor is ordered to withdraw the Turkish part of the population on the advance of the Russians, and to destroy what could be of use to the latter. That the Christians are in great terror of excesses being committed before the Russians arrive.

Consequently we leave this for Toultcha in the gunboat at 4 A.M. to-morrow.

H. C. S.

No. 327.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 378.)

Constantinople, May 2, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 358 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose copy of a report addressed to me by Mr. Sandison, informing me of the steps he had taken, in pursuance of my instructions, to induce the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to come to an agreement with Mohsin Khan, the Persian Minister, as to the inquiry to be instituted at Medina with respect to the outrages alleged to have been committed there on Persian subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 327.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Constantinople, April 25, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I duly communicated to Safvet Pasha your Excellency's instruction of this day's date respecting the offer made by Her Majesty's Government of its good offices in the question of the alleged outrages upon the Persian pilgrims at Medina.

The Porte proposed, as your Excellency may be aware, to institute through its own agents a strict inquiry into the matter at Medina, and to punish the authors of the outrages in question, on the understanding that the Persian Minister at Constantinople should make the necessary reserves for further action and representations in the event of the investigation at Medina and of the punishment of the guilty proving unsatisfactory.

Whilst, however, the Persian Minister objects to this course, the Council of Ministers will not entertain the notion of a Persian delegate being sent to take part in the proposed inquiry. This, it is apprehended, might greatly embitter the ill-feeling which already exists against the Persians, and that it might also lead to a worse treatment of the Persian pilgrims in future.

I repeated to Safvet Pasha how desirable it was, in your Excellency's opinion, to avoid giving Persia an excuse for having a difference with Turkey in a moment like the present, and that, therefore, it was most important that he should endeavour to persuade his colleagues to agree to the presence of a Persian delegate at Medina, which he undertook to do in to-day's Council of Ministers, adding that he would at the same time write to the Grand Sheriff of Mecca, asking him to consent to the arrangement, if possible.

I did not fail to ask Safvet Pasha for information respecting the reported Persian fortifications near Kermanshah. His Excellency replied that he was not yet in possession of the particulars, but that he would gladly communicate them to your Excellency the moment he received them from Bagdad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 328.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 379.)

Constantinople, May 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, containing a Report prepared by Mr. Stoney, principal Agent of the Central Relief

Committee for the Bulgarians, of the number of houses burnt and persons killed during the rising of last May. This is undoubtedly the fullest and most trustworthy statement that has yet been furnished upon this subject, and it is some relief to find that, notwithstanding the horrible nature of the acts committed by the Turkish and Circassian irregulars in putting down the insurrection, the number of their victims was at first enormously exaggerated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 328.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Layard.

Philippopoli, April 30, 1877.

Sir,

MR. W. L. STONEY, principal Agent in this district of the Central Relief Committee for the Bulgarians, has just submitted to me a list of dwellings burnt and persons killed in the Bulgarian rising of last May, and in the subsequent massacres.

The original of this list I have the honour to inclose herewith.

Small as is the total number of killed by the side of the returns collected last summer by Mr. Baring, Mr. Stoney's list may, I think, be accepted as closely approaching the truth. The figures have been obtained by house-to-house visitations, patiently and carefully carried on through the winter months, when the panic under the influence of which immensely exaggerated estimates had been made, had worn off, and when numbers of runaways, at first counted as dead, had returned or were ascertained to be living in the towns or in those of the larger villages that escaped destruction. Mr. Stoney's returns, moreover, tally nearly exactly with figures compiled by the Rev. Mr. Clarke (an American missionary, long resident in the country and familiar with the people), who, as an agent in the distribution of relief, also visited most of the ravaged villages.

The total number of killed arrived at by Mr. Clarke is 3,907, but this includes Turks and Bulgarians executed as ringleaders.

If, however, the number of those who have died since the rising of disease brought on by exposure and privations be added, the total of victims is greatly increased. The exact number of persons carried off by typhus, dysentery, &c., is not known, but from the partial returns available, it is estimated by Mr. Clarke at about 1,500.

As regards the number of Turks killed, your Excellency will observe that Mr. Stoney states them at hardly one-third of the number given by Mr. Baring. Here, however, Mr. Baring's return is unquestionably nearer the truth, as Mr. Stoney omitted in many Bulgarian villages, such as Batak, Peroushtitza, Avrat-Alan, &c., to make inquiries as to the number of Turks killed in the beginning of the Bulgarian movement, and in the fighting between the Bulgarian villagers and the Bashi-Bazouks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 328.

LIST of Houses Burnt and Persons Killed in Bulgarian Rising, and Massacres of May 1876.

Names of Villages.	Houses.		Killed.			
	Original Number.	Burned.	Men.	Women.	Children.	
1. Sindjirli	176	176	9	..	..	
2. Novo Zelo (Yenikeui) ..	280	280	14	..	..	
3. Krestova	66	70	3	..	..	Zinganis.
			4	..	..	
			16	6	..	Turks.
4. Streltcha	372	282	9	..	..	
5. Otlukeui	2,000	169	305	114	152	
6. Clissura	641	631	66	45	114	
7. Bana	77	7	6	3	26	
8. Banya	166	10	7	..	..	

Names of Villages.	Houses.		Killed.			
	Original Number.	Burned.	Men.	Women.	Children.	
9. Leshnick	123	119	10	..	..	
10. Gheren	106	100	3	..	..	
11. Popnitza	133	20	11	8	5	
12. Ereli	139	139	28	..	..	
13. Aivadjik	77	66	2	..	..	
14. Sarigeul	64	52	6	..	..	
15. Dedova	70	20	2	1	1	
16. Boicova	60	56	11	2	..	
17. Kozarsko	98	98	8	6	..	
18. Perastitza	323	323	233	40	40	
19. Keupeli	80	63	14	..	..	
20. Saridja	50	14	5	2	..	
21. Zdrebitchka	104	87	15	4	2	
22. Bratzigovo	480	10	40	..	..	
23. Begha	107	107	1	1	..	
24. Ali Hodja	72	72	11	4	..	
25. Raditovo	165	165	23	..	..	
26. Mitchka	116	74	2	..	..	
27. Petrich	343	322	48	12	25	
28. Simolsko	240	30	9	..	..	
29. Kuminitza	78	9	3	..	..	
30. Poibron	347	152	..	..	..	Houses in village.
	319	97	11	3	2	Houses in the mountains.
31. Lesitchovo	180	60	23	6	5	
32. Geulveri	125	74	..	..	..	On left bank of river.
	75	20	28	3	6	On right bank of river.
33. Shtirkovo	72	45	4	1	..	
34. Dinka	57	42	10	1	..	
35. Dendjikeui	..	..	2	..	..	
36. Pastouchiu	23	23	17	..	..	Turkish.
37. Peshtera	300	..	..	..	..	Bulgarian.
	600	..	7	..	..	
38. Ishikishler	61	01	4	..	..	
39. Elshitza	90	52	4	1	..	
40. Schachlar	62	42	5	1	1	
41. Karamoseal	183	147	33	3	3	
42. Vetrina	385	93	16	1	1	
43. Dere Harman	93	30	1	1	..	
44. Sert Harman	119	45	13	2	10	
45. Slavovitza	102	11	9	5	15	
46. Tzerovo	100	63	22	1	18	
47. Mahovo	..	..	24	4	4	
48. Rakowitza	264	197	3	1	..	a. Women and female children.
49. Batak	587	587	597	879 *a*	298 *b*	b. Boys.
50. Djamali	115	59	9	1	..	
51. Kaligiari	161	126	11	4	7	
52. Tchamuldjler	..	..	2	..	..	
53. Yassikovia	112	112	12	2	6	
54. Banya	135	10	7	..	..	
			1,787	1,168	739	
				3,694		
Totals	..	..				
I. Hafranlu	100	..	34	..	..	
II. Ouroushlu	52	27	3	..	..	Turkish villages.
III. Domanlu	51	8	3	..	..	
IV. Oktchulu	47	43	3	..	..	
V. Jaffirli	29	28	3	..	..	
VI. Pehanlu	12	8	..	..	..	
			46			

Corrected to 28th April, 1877.

(Signed) W. L. STONEY.

No. 329.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 380.)

Constantinople, May 3, 1877.

My Lord,

LAST week Safvet Pasha sent to ask my advice as to allowing Russian subjects and interests in Turkey to be placed under the protection of the German Government. His Excellency said he was quite willing to do so if Russians were to be under the Turkish law, but the German Government insisted that they should still enjoy the benefit of the Capitulations. To this the Porte could not agree, as the subjects of its enemy would be placed on a far more favourable footing than its own, which was manifestly unjust, and would be able to commit with impunity acts which might most seriously compromise the safety and peace of the country. There were no real Russians in Turkey. Those who claimed to be so were Armenians, Greeks, and others—Ottoman subjects—who had abusively obtained Russian naturalization, and who were the most dangerous enemies of the Empire. Moreover, according to the universally recognized law of nations, all Treaties and international engagements were either annulled or suspended during a state of war, and consequently such was the case as regards the Capitulations between Turkey and Russia. The Porte had an undoubted international right, his Excellency maintained, to give a certain time for all Russian subjects to leave the Turkish Empire after war had been declared, and it was under no obligation to permit them to remain under the protection of another Power, although it might consent to do so as a favour.

I replied that, unhappily for Turkey, it appeared that she could no longer appeal to law, equity, or right, and that as this was a case of *force majeure*, and Germany appeared determined to insist, the Porte had better yield with a good grace, rather than get itself into fresh difficulties in its present critical position.

Subsequently M. Karatheodory, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, called upon me to say that the Porte had determined to refuse the demand of the German Government, and that Russian subjects were to be ordered to leave Constantinople within twelve days, and the rest of the Empire within twenty-one. I suggested to him that before taking this step it would be desirable that the Porte should address a note to the German Government offering to accept their protection of Russian subjects on condition that the Capitulations were not to apply to them, as such international agreements were, at least, suspended by the state of war. It would then obtain a written answer which would contain the reasons and arguments upon which the demand of the German Government was founded.

However, my advice was not taken, and the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin was directed to inform the German Government in a note (of which I had the honour to send your Lordship a copy in my despatch No. 368) that their claim to protect Russian subjects could not be acceded to.

To this communication the German Government sent, I am informed, a most peremptory and menacing reply, informing the Porte that they insisted upon assuming the protection of Russian subjects to whom the Capitulations were still to apply, and that if Turkey refused she would do so at her own risk and peril.

I had occasion to speak on the subject with the German Chargé d'Affaires at a meeting at the Embassy of some of the heads of missions. His language was unnecessarily violent. He would listen to no argument; his Government were resolved that the Porte should give way, whether in the right or in the wrong; he had been under the necessity of telling Safvet Pasha so, and the only reason he would give for the determination of his Government was that "Germany was with Russia and not with Turkey."

The French and Italian Chargé d'Affaires, who were present at these declarations, showed no signs of approval of them, although Russian subjects are confided by Russia to the protection of their respective Governments in certain parts of the Empire where there are no German Consular Agents.

The Turkish Ministers, alarmed by the threats of the German Government, held a Council yesterday, at which it was decided to accept the German protection. It would have been better had they done so at first and have saved themselves the humiliation of yielding to a menace.

The high-handed proceedings of the German Government in this case can only be explained, as far as I can judge, by an intention to make Turkey understand that they are prepared to side with Russia in every instance, and as far as possible, in the war.

According to the authorities on international law the right of a State to compel the subjects of its enemy to leave its territories within a certain time may be considered an "international axiom," and all Treaties and international engagements are either annulled

altogether by war, or are suspended until peace is restored. The Capitulations between Turkey and Russia would appear therefore to be at least suspended. The serious danger and inconvenience to the Porte of allowing these Capitulations to be still in force as regards Russia, is that German interference will constantly be used to protect and shield Russian subjects from any interference by the Porte, even where such interference would be just, lawful, and necessary. Thus, I am informed, a Russian, against whom a warrant has issued in the ordinary course of a civil action, and who had taken refuge in the German Consulate, was sent off from Constantinople by an Austrian steamer, and the German Chargé d'Affaires has protested against the seizure of a Russian vessel by a Turkish cruizer in the Black Sea. This evident determination on the part of the German Government to shield and support Russian subjects may, it is to be feared, lead to serious embarrassment to the Porte, if not to something worse.

With reference to this question I beg to call your Lordship's attention to the course which the Porte took in 1868, when it suspended diplomatic relations with Greece, and the correspondence that ensued upon that occasion and presented to Parliament in 1869. In that instance the 'Turkish Government gave fifteen days' to Greek subjects to quit Turkish territory. The Ambassadors of England and France declined to accept the protection of Hellenic subjects and interests; the Russian Ambassador (General Ignatiew) appears to have acquiesced in that decision, and no protest or remonstrance was made against the exercise of what was then recognized to be the legitimate right of a belligerent Power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 330.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 381.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 3, 1877.

AN official notice having been published that Shefket Pasha had been named to the command of a corps d'armée at Shumla, I sent Mr. Dragoman Marinitch at once to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha, to say that if the appointment were not immediately cancelled, my friendly relations with them must cease, as I could not permit the suspicion that my arrival here had been taken advantage of to reinstate a man who, by his connection with the Bulgarian outrages, had incurred the indignation of the English people, and whose punishment had been demanded by Her Majesty's Government. The Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha expressed some surprise at my message, and that Her Majesty's Government should attach so much importance to the employment by the Turkish Government of an officer, who by his activity could render them great services in war. However, they ended by yielding, and Edhem Pasha sent to tell me that Shefket Pasha should be sent to Bagdad, which was a kind of exile.

I did not think it desirable to interfere any further, as, at least, he is far removed from the country where the crimes of which he is charged were committed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 331.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 382. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 3, 1877.

I AM informed, on trustworthy authority, that Russian Agents are at this moment actively engaged in promoting a rising of the Greeks and Bulgarians in Macedonia and Thessaly, and that the intrigues and money for this object come chiefly from the Greek convents on Mount Athos. The principal person employed in the matter by the Russian Government is a certain Macarius, a man, I am assured, of a princely family, who, through the expenditure of a good deal of money here, had himself elected head ("Hegemon") of the Monastery of Pentalimon, in violation of the law, which requires that the heads of the convents on Mount Athos shall be born on Turkish territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 332.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 385.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

ON the representation of the French Chargé d'Affaires and myself as to the risk which the foreign inhabitants of Toultcha might run if they were compelled to evacuate the town, and found themselves without the means of transport, the Grand Vizier, when at the Embassy last night, requested the Minister of Marine to send a vessel of war without delay to Kustendji, or some other place to protect them, and enable them to leave the town.

M. de Mouy expressed himself much satisfied with the assurances that he received from Edhem Pasha on this subject, and with the measures so promptly taken by his Highness to afford protection to foreign subjects.

I have just received a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Stokes, dated the 2nd instant, in which he informs me that the "Cockatrice" is at Toultcha, and that everything is quiet at that place. I fancy that, as usual, there has been a good deal of exaggeration as to the state of affairs there from some of the foreign Consular Agents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 333.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 386.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

I HAVE the honour of forwarding a despatch addressed to your Lordship, under flying seal, by Colonel Siborne, with reference to the stoppage of the navigation of the Danube by the Russians. Colonel Siborne suggests to me that another gunboat should be sent as soon as possible to Sulina, as the population of that place is "said to be becoming agitated." Her Majesty's Government appear to contemplate dispatching a second gunboat to the mouths of the Danube, and I have ventured to suggest in my telegram of 3rd instant, that she might be sent to Kustendji, where there is an English Colony and interests of considerable importance connected with the railway between that place and Tchernavoda, which is, as your Lordship is aware, British property.

Colonel Sankey has already informed me that there is a great deal of uneasiness among the English at Kustendji, and a fear that the Russian authorities, if they advance upon the place, will destroy the railroad. A protest is now being prepared by the representative of the railway company here, under the advice of Mr. Faucett, to be presented to the Russian authorities on the subject, if necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 334.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 387.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

IN consequence of the rumours published by the newspapers here, which for the most part prove to be false, and which, according to the Porte, are calculated to cause serious mischief, if not danger, the law of the press has been modified by a Decree, of which a copy is inclosed, placing the journals published in the Empire under administrative regulations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 334.

Decree.

LA Direction de la Presse agissant par ordre supérieur et sur une décision de la Sublime Porte,

Arrête :

Vu l'état de guerre et jusqu'à nouvel ordre,

La Loi sur la Presse en date du 4 Janvier, 1865, actuellement en vigueur, est et demeure suspendue.

Les journaux publiés dans l'Empire seront, à partir de la publication du présent arrêté, soumis au régime administratif.

Fait à Constantinople le 20 Avril / 2 Mai 1877.

Le Directeur de la Presse,
(Signé) A. MADJID.

No. 335.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 388.)

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I WAS yesterday waited upon by a deputation composed of the Vekil (or representative) and six members of the native Turkish Protestant community, which now claims to consist of between 70,000 and 80,000 souls, scattered over various parts of the Empire. They came to congratulate me on my arrival here, and to express their gratitude to Her Majesty's Government and to Sir Henry Elliot for the protection and assistance they have received from Her Majesty's Embassy.

In an interesting conversation that I held with them, they used the same language that has been addressed to me by the heads of other Christian communities, namely, that they much preferred to remain under Turkish rule than to pass under Russian; and that they dreaded any success on the part of the Russians which would give her Turkish provinces or make her influence all-powerful in Turkey. In either case the native Protestants, they declared, would be persecuted, and a religious movement, which, in their opinion, is producing most important results in the direction of religious freedom and political progress, would be stamped out.

I asked them whether they had any complaints to bring against the Turkish Government. Not, they answered, at that moment. They had always been treated with kindness by the Porte, and had experienced no interference whatever in religious matters. However, since the affair of the deputation to the late Sultan from the Evangelical Alliance, which His Majesty declined to receive, and which they condemned as an unwise and unseasonable proceeding, the Turkish Government had looked upon them with some coldness and suspicion. They hoped that their loyalty to the Sultan and their law-abiding conduct would soon remove these feelings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 336.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 390. Confidential.)

Constantinople, May 3, 1877.

My Lord,

SAFVET PASHA sent to consult me yesterday as to the measures to be taken by the Porte with regard to the Roumanian Agent, and natives of Roumania, established in Turkey. His Excellency said that Prince Charles and his Government were now in open rebellion against their Suzerain, and the case was not similar to that of a state of war between two independent Powers. He was, consequently, at a loss to know how to treat Roumanians.

I replied that I could not take upon myself the responsibility of doing more than suggesting that as the Porte claimed the Roumanians as its subjects, it should treat those who were residing in Turkey in a liberal and conciliatory manner, informing them at once that although their Government had committed what the Turkish Government considered

an act of rebellion, they were not to be held responsible for it, but that they might continue to follow their pursuits, and would receive the fullest protection from the Porte. I strongly urged Safvet Pasha not to have recourse, under any circumstances, to harsh proceedings against them.

Safvet Pasha further wished to know whether I saw any objection to the suspension of relations with the Roumanian Agent. The Porte, he said, could scarcely be expected to continue friendly communication with the Agent of a dependent Government in rebellion, and permit him to interfere in matters connected with subjects of that Government.

I answered that I saw no objection to his following the course he proposed; but I begged him to do it in such a manner as not to offend public opinion in Europe.

His Excellency has informed me that he intends to act upon my suggestions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 337.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 392. Secret.)

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed most confidentially that the Porte has received intelligence that Russia has sent four ships of war into the Adriatic, and that they have been reported off Brindisi. Her object it is suspected is to raise the Island of Crete against the Porte, or to give aid to the Montenegrins and to induce the other Christian populations in the west of Turkey in Europe to take up arms against the Sultan. The Turkish Government are taking active measures to have a fleet ready for operations in the Mediterranean, and are persuaded that they can fit out sufficient ships to prevent the Russians from carrying out their designs, or to engage them successfully if they will accept a battle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 338.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 394.)

Constantinople, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of the instructions I have addressed to Sir Arnold Kemball on his proceeding to join the Turkish army in Asia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 338.

Mr. Layard to Major-General Sir A. Kemball.

Constantinople, April 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received the orders of Her Majesty's Government to send you to the head-quarters of the Turkish army in Asia, and I request that you will proceed to the seat of war in that quarter with all practicable despatch. Owing to the suspension of the usual means of communication with the coast of the Black Sea a passage will be afforded you to Trebizond in Her Majesty's ship "Antelope."

Your duties on this occasion will be the same as those intrusted to you when sent to Servia. You will report fully the course and progress of the operations undertaken by the Ottoman forces, and issues importing or resulting therefrom.

You will also carefully observe the bearing of the Turkish soldiery in their relations to the civil population with a view to prevent excesses of the nature of those which have heretofore been laid to their charge, and in the event of circumstances coming to your knowledge which are opposed to the usages of civilized warfare you will bring the same under the cognizance of the Turkish military authorities, employing, if need be, your influence with them in the most urgent manner to put a stop thereto.

For the rest you will exercise your own discretion in following the movements of the

army in the field, and in discharging generally the office of delegate from a neutral Government to a belligerent camp.

Lieutenant Dougall, R.N., has been appointed to accompany you in the capacity of Secretary and Aide-de-camp.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 339.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 395. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 4, 1877.

THE Porte has determined to send Zuhti Effendi as financial Commissioner to London, and he leaves Constantinople to-day. The object of his journey is to come to some understanding with the foreign creditors of Turkey and to reassure them as to the intention of the Turkish Government to pay the interest on their foreign debts, or as much of it as they are able, as soon as the state of finances of the Empire will permit it to do so. The Porte professes itself most desirous to remove from the public mind the impression that Turkey desires to act dishonestly towards her creditors, by repudiating altogether the policy of Mahmoud Pasha in issuing the decrees which declared her in a state of bankruptcy.

The Sultan himself spoke to me very strongly on this subject, expressing very sincere sorrow that the good name of Turkey had been so greatly injured by this act of repudiation.

Zuhti Effendi will also endeavour to make some arrangement for raising a small loan, between two and a half and three millions I am informed, upon the Egyptian tribute. The Turkish Minister of Finance is already in communication with some English and French capitalists on the subject.

The extreme straits to which the Turkish Government is reduced from want of money, which threatens to paralyze all their military operations, renders it of the utmost importance to them to obtain even this small sum to carry on the war. The Minister of Finance is endeavouring to find some securities upon which he may be able to raise hereafter a further loan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I have warned the Grand Vizier and Zuhti Effendi that they must not expect assistance from Her Majesty's Government in any attempt to raise money, as such assistance would be a breach of neutrality according to international law, and that a public loan might not be permitted upon the same grounds.

A. H. L.

No. 340.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 397.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 4, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, copies of despatches from Her Majesty's Consul at Adrianople, and Her Majesty's Vice-Consuls at Bourgas and Gallipoli, respecting public feeling in Roumelia since the declaration of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 340.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, April* 26, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the policy of Russia during the crisis which has led to the present war, and the conduct of that Power in commencing

hostilities practically before the declaration of war, seems to be universally condemned by all classes of this place.

The feeling of sympathy for Turkey is accompanied by the expression of a hope that one or more of the Great Powers will interfere on her behalf, and action on the part of Great Britain is especially looked for.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 340.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Adrianople, May* 1, 1877.

THE accounts I receive from Philippopolis and other districts agree in stating that everything is quiet, and that the attitude of the Mahomedans towards the Christians is now confiding and friendly.

Inclosure 3 in No. 340.

Vice-Consul Brophy to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Bourgas, April* 24, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the following Nahieler, or Mudirliks, have been chosen provisionally in this Consular district:—

Caza of Slimnia.

Slimnia	.. ..	Bulgarian and Turkish.
Graditch	.. ..	Bulgarian.
Buyuk Cheshli	.. ..	Bulgarian.
Karmanli	.. ..	Bulgarian. Only a Turkish farm in this village.
Tchemmlek-keui	.. ..	Bulgarian and Turkish.
Tekerkeshli	.. ..	Bulgarian. Only a Turkish farm in this village.

Caza of Achialo.

Achialo	.. ..	Greek and Turkish.
Akhli	.. ..	Turkish and Gagaous (Ellenco-Plach)?

Caza of Missemria.

Ecketch	.. ..	Bulgarian.
Gueuziki	.. ..	Turkish, Tartar, and Gipsy.

As far as I can learn, the selection of Nahiéler thus made is subject to the approval of the Central Government, but the authorities here seem to have but little information upon this or any other point concerning the new decentralization movement.

From Slimnia I am told "that the Bulgarians do not seem to have much hope of any good coming out of these changes; rather the reverse, since the 'Azas' (members of the local Council) will be half Christians, half Turks, irrespective of their proportionate numbers, and the Mudir, Mufti, and the other officials, will almost always be Mussulman, and thus the Christians will be in a small minority."

It is only natural that the Rayahs of the provinces should wish to keep the reins of local government in their own hands, but I much doubt whether, if they were the sole ruling element, the same injustice would not be exercised by them upon the Turks as they now suffer at the hands of the Mussulmans, and I do not believe that any lasting benefit would accrue even to the Christian population of Roumelia by the appointment everywhere of a majority of Christians. The Bulgarian and Greek peasants—the agricultural class, are, I know, of the same opinion, and believe that they would only be exchanging one tyranny for another. In the provinces men and not measures are required, but the difficulty is to find honest and capable men to execute the already existing laws, which, if properly carried out, would leave but little to be desired.

On the 21st instant five Circassian prisoners (all brigands or cattle-stealers) escaped from the prison of this town, the keys having been stolen from the sleeping gaoler. This occurrence is most unfortunate, as the men, being known, cannot return to their villages, and must perforce turn highway robbers, and the only force, regular cavalry, capable of recapturing them, was withdrawn from this district ten days since.

I regret to have to report that the present feeling of those Turks who are summoned to serve in the ranks of the army is decidedly hostile, and worse than merely hostile, to the

Bulgarians. They say, with perfect truth, that in their villages only old men are to be found, and that their fields remain unploughed, adding that the Bulgarians are the cause of this state of things, and that they will revenge themselves by exterminating the whole race. I should have considered this as being merely one of the common empty boasts made so frequently by the Turks, did not nearly all the men who speak thus declare expressly that they have no ill-will against either Greeks or foreigners, and this exception appears to me to indicate the existence of a settled purpose which bodes no good to the Slavs of Roumelia—at any rate in the possible event of a campaign in which the Turks should be defeated, and have to retreat through a country inhabited chiefly by Bulgarians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BROPHY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 340.

Vice-Consul Odoni to Consul-General Fawcett.

Gallipoli, le 28 Avril, 1877.

(Extrait.)

LA déclaration de guerre de la part de la Russie a produit une très bonne impression sur la population Turque en général, tant en ville que dans les districts, et je constate qu'elle ne s'est laissé transporter à aucun acte de violence contre les Chrétiens, ce à quoi cependant, on s'attendait, surtout dans les districts d'Enos, Ikessan, et Ghiumurdgina.

Je ne saurais à quoi attribuer cette parfaite tranquillité si ce n'est la certitude dans laquelle se trouvent les Turcs qu'ils auront bon marché des Russes et que ces derniers devront implorer la haute intervention des Puissances pour arrêter la marche victorieuse de l'armée Turque. S'il en était autrement, et s'ils pouvaient supporter, un seul instant, que les Russes seraient vainqueurs je suis persuadé qu'ils tacheraient autant que possible à se venger de leur mauvaise humeur sur les Chrétiens.

Quelques nouvelles arrivées ici du théâtre de la guerre, en Asie, qui paraissent être favorables aux Turcs, dans deux petites rencontres avec les Russes, ont beaucoup contribué à calmer de plus en plus l'esprit de la basse classe de la population Turque de l'arrondissement de Gallipoli, qui commence à croire que l'affaire finira bientôt en faveur de la Turquie. Le revers de la médaille pourrait cependant donner lieux à des actes et conséquences fâcheuses.

No. 341.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 400.) *Constantinople, May 4*, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Rhodes, respecting the state of affairs in the Island of Cassos.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 341.

Vice-Consul Billiotti to Mr. Jocelyn.

Rhodes, le 23 Avril, 1877.

Monsieur,

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance quelques faits regrettables qui se sont dernièrement produits à l'Ile de Cassos, l'une des Sporades. Mais pour bien préciser la situation actuelle, il n'est peut-être pas superflu de retracer à grands traits les faits antérieurs qui ont eu lieu et qui ont donné motif à messieurs mes prédécesseurs d'adresser des rapports spéciaux à ce sujet.

Cassos, qui à l'exception d'un Caïmacam et d'une dizaine de gendarmes Musulmans, est exclusivement habitée par des Chrétiens (6,000 âmes environ), possède une marine marchande assez importante. Malheureusement cette île a été de tout temps le rendez-vous et le lieu de refuge des capitaines barattaires, qui sont non-seulement assurés d'impunité, mais qui peuvent encore y trouver toutes les facilités désirables pour donner à leurs actes coupables les apparences de la légalité par le concours intéressé des autorités et surtout des primats indigènes de l'île.

Quoique jusqu'à présent les Gouverneurs Mutessarifs de Rhodes, d'où dépend Cassos, fussent parfaitement au courant de la situation, il n'en est pas moins vrai que les justes réclamations et poursuites judiciaires des compagnies d'assurances maritimes Européennes, souvent frustrées dans leurs intérêts, sont venues presque toujours se heurter contre l'inertie ou le peu d'autorité que possédait les Gouverneurs de Rhodes, et aussi et surtout contre l'apathie des Gouverneurs-Généraux résidant alors aux Dardanelles. Cet état de choses, tout en lésant bien souvent des intérêts étrangers, ne manquait pas de porter en même temps une grave atteinte aux intérêts des habitants eux-mêmes de Cassos, qui avaient fini par gagner, non sans raison, il est vrai, une réputation de fameux barattaires. Quoique les Cassiotes passent en général pour des gens assez turbulents et fortement enclins, dans tous les cas, à commettre des actes de baratterie, il paraîtrait cependant que la majorité de la population, en ressentant tout le désavantage de la situation créée à leur pays, désire remédier le mal.

Quoiqu'il en soit, son Excellence Sawas Pacha, le nouveau Gouverneur-Général de l'Archipel Ottoman, résidant à Rhodes, ayant reconnu la situation, est décidé à y porter remède.

Voici maintenant ce qui vient de se passer tout dernièrement à Cassos. M. L. Sackellandes, Agent Consulaire des Pays-Bas et Représentant de Chambres d'Assurances Maritimes, a été victime, il y a quelques jours, d'un attentat d'assassinat. Le mobile paraît avoir été, dit-on, une vengeance de la part de barattaires qui, poursuivis par ce monsieur par compte de compagnies, étaient parvenus, grâce au mauvais vouloir des autorités de cette île, à se soustraire jusqu'ici de la justice.

Depuis, M. Valti, Vice-Consul de Grèce à Cassos, a été, lui aussi, l'objet d'une tentative d'assassinat dans sa propre maison, et c'est, assure-t-on, pour le concours qu'il avait prêté à M. Sackellandes. Ces deux attentats ont été commis par des Chrétiens indigènes.

M. Vitali, le Vice-Consul de Grèce à Rhodes, sur l'ordre qu'il a reçu de son Gouvernement, vient de partir pour Cassos, pour faire une enquête sur l'attentat commis.

Son Excellence Sawas Pacha, tout en reconnaissant la nécessité d'adopter des mesures énergiques pour la suppression de pareils actes criminels, et tout en voyant qu'il y a aussi de la culpabilité de la part des Primats indigènes, et au moins de l'inertie de la part du Caïmacam de Cassos, semble cependant y voir en même temps des actes répréhensibles à reprocher à M. Vitali, le Vice-Consul de Grèce, qui serait, d'après ce qui aurait été rapporté au Vali, le chef d'un parti d'opposition à Cassos, et qui aurait en même temps établi dans cette île au bureau où des passeports Hellènes étaient amplement et illicitement délivrés.

Il semblerait toutefois que son Excellence Sawas Pacha ne se déterminera à agir avec énergie à Cassos que tout autant qu'il sera en position de faire respecter, même par la force, les ordres qu'il y donnera, ou qu'il ira porter en personne.

Il est à présumer que le premier soin du Gouverneur-Général sera de faire remplacer les Primats indigènes actuels qui ont prêté un concours si actif aux barattaires et aux mauvais sujets, et que le Caïmacam sera également révoqué de ses fonctions, mais si j'ai bien saisi la pensée du Gouverneur-Général, c'est qu'il insistera en même temps sur la nécessité de faire remplacer le titulaire du Vice-Consulat de Grèce à Cassos.

Tout me porte à croire cependant qu'avant agir son Excellence le Vali a demandé des instructions spéciales à Constantinople.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) C. BILIOTTI.

No. 342.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 12.)

(Most Confidential.)

Sir, *Pera, May 4*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency a confidential conversation which I had last night with Raouf Pasha, the Minister of Marine, on the subject of the present war with Russia.

His Excellency expressed extreme anxiety as to the results of the campaign in Asia Minor, which he already considers as tending to a complete failure under the mismanagement of an unfit Commander-in-chief like Moukhtar Pasha, who had given ample proof of utter incapacity during the war with Montenegro. In the present instance too, he has so disposed of his army as to render success extremely doubtful, particularly in presence

of its numerical inferiority, which, under a better direction, might have proved efficient for defensive purposes.

His Excellency assured me that whilst the Russians dispose at this moment of 120,000 men, divided into three army corps in full march upon Kars, Erzeroom, and Batoum, and . . . . the Turkish forces hardly muster 80,000 men all told. For various other reasons, matters in Asia Minor, his Excellency continued, cannot fail to take an unfortunate turn for Turkey, and what he deplored most was that it was perhaps already too late to try to avert the coming catastrophe, for which the Seraskier alone, he thought, should be held responsible. No man, he considered, could be more unfit for the post of War Minister in a moment like the present, and no man, he added, could bear any comparison with him in point of general ignorance, vulgarity, and many other failings, notwithstanding which he was still allowed to remain in office, chiefly owing to his close connection with Mahmoud Pasha, Damat, the Sultan's brother-in-law, who supports him at the Palace.

The combined action and alliance of two such undesirable and yet powerful Ministers can only lead to some national misfortune at the present juncture, but it is earnestly hoped that the Sultan may soon become alive to the necessity of an immediate change at the Seraskeriat, in which case Raouf Pasha thinks, both Ministers must fall together.

From what I could gather from his Excellency, Said Pasha, the Ferik of the Palace, takes much the same view as himself of the Seraskier's general character and military talents.

Raouf Pasha expressed himself more satisfied with the prospects of the campaign in European Turkey, where, he thinks, the peculiar nature of the country would afford far greater advantages than in Asia for a defensive war, which might be successfully conducted by Abdul-Kérim Pasha, the Generalissimo, who in many instances must, however, be guided by the advice of some experienced tactician.

In confirmation of what your Excellency was recently told by the Minister of Finance, Raouf Pasha estimated the available forces now in European Turkey at 215 battalions, which represent an aggregate of 161,250 men. The want of able generals, however, will be greatly felt, there being, according to Raouf Pasha, but two distinguished officers, namely, Aziz Pasha and Osman Pasha, who might be entrusted with high military commands, and who are more than likely to win the confidence of the army.

Speaking then of himself, his Excellency seemed to say that whilst he cared little for the post he now occupied, he did not at all feel to be in his proper element, and that he would have greatly preferred a command in the army, where his services might prove more useful to his country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 343.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 12.*)

(No. 115. Political.) *Cairo, May 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a translation of the Khedive's address to the Chamber of Delegates, which was convoked to decide upon the extraordinary resources that can be raised to defray the expenses of sending further assistance to the Porte.

Chérif Pasha tells me that, as the Chamber has demanded particulars respecting the taxes paid in the large towns with the view of equalizing as far as possible the burden of any extra taxation between town and country, the decision may be delayed for some days, and meanwhile the Egyptian Government have warned the Porte that it will be necessary for them to convoy the troops that may be sent from here to Constantinople.

Prince Hassan will command the Egyptian contingent, and he will take with him a strong corps of engineers.

The Turco-Egyptian postal service with Constantinople has been discontinued, and the only communication will be by the Austrian Lloyds' line.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 342*.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 12.*)

(No. 114. Political.)

My Lord, *Cairo, May 4, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to state that I have received no further information to confirm the language of the Russian Agent here respecting the intended Russian naval demonstration in the Mediterranean, which I reported on the 29th ultimo.

It is very possible that his language was only meant to intimidate the Egyptian Government.

The Porte has communicated to the Viceroy by telegraph the regulations that have been promulgated at Constantinople regarding the treatment of Russian shipping, neutral commerce, &c., together with directions for the application to the Suez Canal of the rules in force for the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

The Khedive and the Egyptian Government have decided in conformity with these instructions:—

1. To forbid the passage of Russian men-of-war through the Canal.

2. To allow the passage of all other men-of-war, and of all vessels of the mercantile marine, including Russian vessels, subject, however, to the right of visiting and searching them for contraband of war.

The entrance to the Canal is to be protected by torpedoes, which, I am assured, will be carefully laid down by experienced officers; and the passage for commerce will be buoyed.

If Russia chooses to make reprisals for the stoppage of her navy, the passage of her mercantile marine through the Canal will probably be prohibited.

This decision will be officially notified to foreign Governments after it has been approved by the Porte.

The question of the number of troops that Egypt will send to Turkey is still in abeyance, the Chamber of Delegates not having yet arrived at any final decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 343.

Address of the Khedive to the Chamber of Delegates.

LORSQUE l'an passé quelques provinces de l'Empire s'étaient soulevée contre l'autorité légitime de Sa Majesté le Gouvernement Egyptien avait envoyé des troupes à Constantinople.

Aujourd'hui, malgré l'esprit de conciliation le plus évident et le désir le plus sincère du maintien de la paix démontrée par la Sublime Porte, la Russie ayant déclaré la guerre, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale s'est trouvé forcément engagé dans une lutte avec cette Puissance.

Il importe à l'Egypte d'envoyer des troupes comme précédemment et d'en fixer l'effectif. Mais cette fixation ne peut se faire sans connaître préalablement la somme que le pays peut y affecter, puisque, comme vous le savez, les ressources budgétaires ne nous permettent pas d'y satisfaire.

Il faut donc, pour remplir nos devoirs envers Sa Majesté, répondre aux exigences de la situation et respecter nos engagements financiers, créer une ressource exceptionnelle qui puisse permettre au Ministre de la Guerre de se fixer sur l'effectif des troupes qu'il peut expédier.

C'est le but de la convocation de la Chambre.

Mon fils, Hassan, étant soldat, partira; il partagera avec ses compatriotes et frères d'armes l'honneur de la défense d'une cause juste et des droits sacrés de l'Empire.

(Signé) ISMAIL.

No. 344.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 116. Political.)

Cairo, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 114 of this day's date, reporting the manner in which the Egyptian Government propose to carry out the instructions of the Porte (of which I inclose a copy) to apply the rules for the passage of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to the Suez Canal, I trust that Her Majesty's Government and neutral Powers in general will approve the decision at which the Khedive and his Government have arrived.

The proposed rules appear to me to carry out the intentions of the Act of Concession, which states that the Canal and its dependent ports shall be "ouverts à toujours, comme passages neutres, à tout navire de commerce traversant d'une mer à l'autre, sans aucune distinction, exclusion, ni préférence de personnes ou de nationalités."

My great fear is of the danger of a system of defence by torpedoes, and of the risk of accidents happening by unskilfull handling or careless pilotage. I am told that the torpedoes will be carefully laid down and managed by experienced European officers, and that, in the absence of all fortified works, they are the only defence that Egypt can provide; but it seems to me very improbable that a Russian man-of-war would attempt to enter the Canal by force in spite of the prohibition of the Egyptian Government, when it might be shut in there as securely as a mouse in a mouse-trap, and that, therefore, a simple prohibition of entry would be quite sufficient.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum made by my Swedish colleague here, who is an earnest advocate of the redemption of the Suez Canal dues after the manner of the Scheldt and Sound dues, giving his views of the rules that ought to be applied to the Canal in time of war. They seem to accord precisely with the decision taken by the Egyptian Government.

C. V.

Inclosure 1 in No. 344.

The Grand Vizier to the Khedive.

Constantinople, le 1 *Mai*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

J'AI l'honneur de faire part à votre Altesse des décisions que le Gouvernement Impérial vient de prendre à l'égard des navires Russes et du commerce des neutres.

Article 1. Un délai de cinq jours francs, à dater de la notification sur les lieux de la présente décision, est accordé aux navires Russes qui se trouvaient dans les ports de l'Empire le $\frac{13}{25}$ Avril, 1877, pour quitter les eaux Ottomanes; à cet effet il leur sera délivré sur leur demande par les autorités douanières un sauf-conduit pour se rendre dans le port Russe ou neutre le plus rapproché sans pouvoir toutefois traverser les détroits pour passer de la Méditerranée dans la Mer Noire et réciproquement.

Art. 2. Le Gouvernement Ottoman déclare son intention d'observer les règles de droit maritime formulées dans la déclaration signée à Paris le 16 Avril, 1856, et d'après laquelle (1), la course est et demeure abolie; (2), le pavillon neutre couvre la marchandise ennemie à l'exception de la contrebande de guerre; (3), la marchandise neutre, à exception la contrebande de guerre, n'est pas saisissable sous pavillon ennemie; (4), les blocus pour être obligatoires doivent être effectifs, c'est-à-dire maintenus par une force suffisante pour interdire réellement l'accès du littoral à l'ennemi.

Art. 3. Afin d'empêcher la contrebande de guerre le Gouvernement Ottoman usera du droit de visiter tant en haute mer que dans les eaux Ottomanes et lors du passage par les détroits des navires en destination d'un port Russe ou d'un point de la côte occupé par l'ennemi ou même en cas de suspection en destination d'un port Ottoman ou neutre.

Art. 4. Les dispositions de la présente décision entreront immédiatement en vigueur; elle sera portée à la connaissance de tous les intéressés par une communication officielle adressée aux Représentants étrangers résidants à Constantinople, par la publication dans le "Journal Officiel" de l'Empire et par télégramme transmis aux chefs-lieux des vilayets; je dois ajouter que pour tout ce qui concerne les navires, le commerce des neutres, et la navigation en général, le désir de Sa Majesté est que votre Altesse notifie de son côté que les dispositions relatives au détroit des Dardanelles et du Bosphore seront applicables au passage du Canal de Suez.

Je prie votre Altesse de vouloir bien donner les ordres nécessaires à qui de droit pour que les dispositions qui précèdent puissent entrer immédiatement en vigueur en ce qui concerne l'Égypte.

Inclosure 2 in No. 344.

Memorandum.

(Extract.)

RESTE maintenant à examiner à quelles lois le Canal de Suez est soumis, et quels changements y sont nécessaires pour que le Canal puisse répondre à son but.

Les deux rives du Canal de Suez étant toutes deux Égyptiennes et sa largeur très-limitée, il est donc Egyptien dans tout son parcours et par suite soumis à la juridiction Egyptienne.

Etant la voie de communication directe entre la Méditerranée et la Mer Rouge et ouverte à la grande navigation. Quoique ce détroit n'ait pas été créé par la nature et soit une œuvre d'art cela ne change rien à la question.

C'est sans doute dans la catégorie des eaux comme celles des Belts et du détroit de Messine que le Canal de Suez doit être classé.

Nous allons donc examiner comment est réglé dans le Canal de Suez le passage des bâtiments tant ceux de commerce que ceux de guerre.

Pour ce qui concerne le passage des navires de commerce, soit en temps de paix soit en temps de guerre, il faut recourir aux stipulations contenues dans l'Acte de Concession de la Compagnie dont l'Article 14 déclare: "Le grand Canal Maritime de Suez à Peluse et les ports en dépendant, ouverts à toujours, comme passages neutres à tout navire de commerce traversant d'une mer à l'autre sans aucune distinction."

La Sublime Porte et l'Egypte, garantissant même en temps de guerre le passage des navires de commerce indépendamment de leur nationalité par le Canal, accorde donc plus que tout Gouvernement n'a permis à la navigation étrangère dans ses parages. Mais en examinant de plus près cette expression "ouverts à toujours, comme passages neutres à tout navire de commerce," nous verrons que ces priviléges sont en grande partie illusoires. En effet, en garantissant le passage du Canal, la Sublime Porte ou l'Egypte ne se sont

nullement déclarés obligés de s'abstenir de capturer les bâtiments de commerce, appartenant à leurs ennemis, avant ou après leur entrée dans le Canal, soit dans la Méditerranée soit dans la Mer Rouge. Courant donc tout de même le risque d'être capturé, la déclaration dans la concession, que le Canal est neutre, est donc presque sans valeur pour des navires appartenant aux nations en guerre avec la Sublime Porte. Quant aux navires appartenant aux nations amies de la Porte la neutralité du Canal, une fois que le Canal est déclaré "ouvert pour toujours," est sans signification.

La dernière stipulation "que le Canal reste ouvert à toujours," est donc la condition essentielle, puisque elle place sa navigation dans des conditions au moins aussi favorable que celle des autres détroits, par exemple des Belts de Messine et autres.

De même donc que les Belts en temps de guerre ne pourraient être fermées aux navires venant de la Baltique en destination pour la Mer du Nord ou *vice versâ*, de même le Canal de Suez ne pourrait être fermé aux navires qui ne font que franchir le Canal pour des ports étrangers. Le blocus devrait être limité aux navires destinés pour les ports dans le Canal même ou autres ports Egyptiens.

Contre le contenu de la concession réglant la navigation voie du Canal, il n'y aurait qu'une objection à faire, c'est-à-dire que la concession n'est qu'un acte passé entre la Sublime Porte et le Gouvernement Egyptien d'une part, et la Compagnie d'autre part. Mais cette manière d'envisager la question est à peine soutenable.

Le caractère officiel que la Sublime Porte et le Gouvernement Egyptien ont donné à cet acte, l'intervention de plusieurs Puissances, soit à l'époque où la concession fût accordée soit plus tard pour définir son interprétation, lui donne un caractère tout à fait international et lie ainsi la Sublime Porte et l'Egypte vis-à-vis des autres Gouvernements.

Maintenant se pose la question du passage des navires de guerre.

Quant à leur passage en temps de paix, il n'existe, il est vrai, aucun acte émané de la Sublime Porte ou de l'Egypte proclamant leur libre passage. Mais, le fait est que ce droit a existé déjà depuis six ans, et que l'enterprise du Canal est basée tant sur le passage des navires de guerre que sur ceux des navires de commerce. Il faut donc logiquement admettre que le droit de passage des navires de guerre en temps de paix est un droit acquis.

Du reste, on se demande quelle raison valable la Sublime Porte ou l'Egypte en temps de paix pourrait donner pour défendre à un navire de guerre, qui acquitte les droits voulus, de franchir le Canal. Ce ne serait ni plus ni moins qu'un acte hostile vis-à-vis de la nation à laquelle appartiendrait le navire, car ce serait exactement la même chose que si la France ou l'Angleterre en temps de paix voulaient interdire à un navire de guerre étranger, naviguant dans la Manche, d'entrer dans leurs eaux.

Reste donc à examiner le passage des navires de guerre en temps de guerre.

Il faudrait naturellement ici distinguer les navires appartenant à des nations neutres de ceux appartenant aux parties belligérantes et entre ces derniers ceux qui se trouvent en guerre avec la Sublime Porte.

Quant au passage des navires de guerre neutres, il devrait, il nous semble, être assimilé au passage des navires de guerre en temps de paix.

Quant aux navires, appartenant aux États belligérants non en guerre avec la Sublime Porte ou l'Egypte, nous nous référons de nouveau à l'usage du passage des Belts. Ce passage, en cas de neutralité du Danmark, n'étant pas défendu aux navires de guerre belligérants, nous ne voyons pas comment le passage du Canal de Suez, le cas échéant de neutralité de la Sublime Porte, pourrait leur être interdite.

Que la neutralité de l'Egypte doit être respectée par les navires de guerre lors de leur passage, cela va sans dire. Et que en pareil cas l'Egypte ait le droit de prendre certaines mesures de police et de précaution dans ses propres eaux, par exemple de régler le nombre des navires de guerre qui pourraient à la fois traverser le Canal, cela est incontestable en tant que ces mesures ne porteraient, bien entendu, pas atteinte aux principes du libre passage.

Quant aux passages des navires de guerre appartenant à un ennemi de la Sublime Porte, il est impossible d'admettre que le passage libre du Canal soit admis.

Un tel droit ne pourrait jamais être accordé par la Sublime Porte, ou accepté par les Puissances à moins, toutefois, que les Puissances ne s'obligent à empêcher tout acte d'hostilité durant la traversée de leur navire et qu'en outre les dits navires n'aient pas une destination hostile à leur sortie du Canal contre une autre partie du territoire Ottoman. Un tel engagement nous paraît impossible à obtenir, car il nécessiterait de la part des Puissances une garantie solidaire, que probablement elles ne peuvent ni ne veulent donner à cause des devoirs et des conséquences de guerre graves qui pourraient en résulter. Le passage du Canal de Suez par des navires de guerre, appartenant à une nation ennemie de

la Sublime Porte, reste donc une question qui, comme le passage de tous les autres détroits et eaux appartenant à un état ennemi en temps de guerre, se décide par la force.

Le seul but nécessaire et désirable à obtenir consisterait donc dans la déclaration claire et précise que la navigation voie du Canal de Suez est soumis aux mêmes lois et régie par des mêmes principes de droit que celle des autres détroits ouverts à la grande navigation et que les Puissances s'obligent à respecter cette grande œuvre et à ne pas la détruire en temps de guerre.

No. 345.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 117. Political. Confidential.)

Cairo, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 56 of the 27th ultimo, I must remark that although Count Schouvaloff has characterized the probability of reprisals by Russia upon Egypt, in punishment for the assistance she might send to Turkey, as a pure invention and a "canard affreux," I was distinctly told both by the Khedive and by Chérif Pasha that language to this effect had been used by M. de Lex, my Russian colleague, and that the danger the Khedive might incur of exposing himself to reprisals of this nature had also been strongly represented to him by my French colleague in the communication he made to His Highness, which I reported on the 22nd ultimo.

It may be that M. de Lex went beyond his instructions in using such language, or that he only intended to intimidate the Khedive; but supported as it was by the significant hints of my French colleague, and by the rumours of the probable collection of a large Russian naval force in these waters, I felt it my duty to report it to your Lordship, and I do not regret having done so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 346.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 121. Political.)

Cairo, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THERE is no change in political affairs here, nor do I yet observe any particular enthusiasm for the cause of Turkey in the present war, notwithstanding that news has been received here of a serious check sustained by the Turks in the neighbourhood of Kars.

The officers and non-commissioned officers in the army are certainly volunteering for service in Turkey, but, on the other hand, the people seem to avoid the recruiting sergeant as much as they can; the progress of the war may change this lukewarmness.

A suspicion exists that the small amount of money hitherto paid into the "Caisse" on account of the next coupon due on the 15th of July (only about 416,000*l.* has been paid in to meet over 2,000,000*l.*) is attributable to the desire of the Viceroy to watch events and to keep back money that he may employ in case of need; but I do not believe this to be the case, or that the small receipts are attributable to anything else than to the fact that the last two months occur between the harvest seasons, when no taxes can be levied; the good faith shown by the Khedive in meeting other engagements proves, I think, that he has taken to heart the lesson of the disadvantage to Turkey of her failure to meet her financial engagements, and that he is earnest in his desire to keep faith with his creditors, and thus to re-establish his credit and good name in Europe.

He has made an arrangement with the creditors of his "Daira," or private estate, upon the following terms:—

He gives the holders of bonds of the Daira endorsed by the State a bonus of 10 per cent., amounting to 700,000*l.*, which is to be secured by an assignment of 50,000*l.* annually from his civil list, of which 5 per cent. will be taken for interest and the remainder for sinking fund.

This will quiet the claims of a very troublesome portion of his creditors, as well as his difficulties with the Mixed Tribunals.

The remainder of the debt (amounting to 9,000,000*l.*) will be secured by the revenues of the Daira property, plus 90,000*l.* a-year from the civil list; of the annual revenue thus raised 5 per cent. is guaranteed, and will be apportioned for interest, 2 per cent. for sinking fund, and, if there be any further balance, 1 per cent. more for supplementary interest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 347.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 179.)

Rome, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date directing me to inquire if the Italian Government will join in the representations which your Lordship had instructed Mr. Layard to make to the Porte, relative to the short period of grace allowed to neutral vessels in the Turkish notification of blockade.

I called upon Signor Melegari this morning, and communicated to him the substance of your Lordship's instructions to Mr. Layard, and, for his Excellency's convenience, left with him a Memorandum, of which the inclosed is a copy, asking him at the same time whether he would instruct the Italian Chargé d'Affaires to join Mr. Layard in his efforts to procure a prolongation of the period which had been allowed to neutral vessels for leaving and entering Russian ports.

His Excellency, after requesting me to thank your Lordship for this communication, informed me that already, in consequence of representations which had been made by several Chambers of Commerce in Italy,—more especially by those interested in the trade of the Sea of Azoff,—he had desired the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to point out the hardship of the shortness of the period allowed by the Turkish notification of blockade, but that he would be most willing to instruct the Chargé d'Affaires to join in Mr. Layard's representations on this subject; and would at once send orders to him to this effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 347.

Memorandum.

M. LAYARD a été chargé d'insister auprès de la Porte pour qu'elle accorde une prolongation des jours de grâce spécifiés dans la notification du blocus en faveur des bâtiments neutres. Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique désirerait une prolongation qui serait suffisante pour le cas de bâtiments actuellement en route pour des ports Russes.

Le Gouvernement des États-Unis accorda quinze jours et d'autres Gouvernements en cas semblables ont accordé des périodes même plus prolongés.

Le Gouvernement de la Reine espère que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie voudra bien donner l'ordre à son Représentant à Constantinople de s'associer aux efforts de M. Layard pour obtenir la prolongation désirée.

Rome, le 8 *Mai*, 1877.

No. 348.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(No. 180.)

Rome, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive on Sunday evening, the 6th instant, your Lordship's despatch No. 175 of the 3rd instant, inclosing copies of your Lordship's despatch to Her

Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, in reply to Prince Gortchakow's Circular despatch of the $\frac{7}{19}$th ultimo, announcing that the Emperor of Russia had ordered his armies to cross the Turkish frontiers; and to inform your Lordship that I immediately communicated a copy of this despatch to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs in a note of which I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 348.

Sir A. Paget to M. Melegari.

Rome, May 6, 1877

M. le Ministre,

IN compliance with instructions which I have received from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I have the honour to inclose to your Excellency herewith a copy of a despatch which his Lordship has addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh in answer to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 19th ultimo, announcing that the Emperor of Russia had given orders to his armies to cross the frontier of Turkey.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 349.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 188. Confidential.)

Rome, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

IN an interview I had with Signor Melegari this morning I again asked him whether he had taken the resolution, seeing that Prince Reuss was now formally appointed Ambassador of Germany to Constantinople, to send back Count Corti.

His Excellency replied that he deferred giving Count Corti instructions to repair to his post until Prince Reuss had actually started, repeating the same reasons which he gave me before, as reported in my despatch No. 165 of the 1st instant, for his wishing the return of the Italian Minister at Constantinople to coincide with the arrival of the new German Ambassador, viz., that both Powers were associated in the protection of Russian subjects in Turkey during the war.

Whatever may be the value of these reasons, I cannot divest my mind of the feeling that there are others which Signor Melegari cannot avow, viz., that his decision is overruled by the counsels of those to whom I alluded in my despatch No. 158, Very Confidential, of the 28th ultimo, or, to speak plainly, of Count Tornielli, the Secretary-General of the Foreign Department. However this may be, it is my intention, if I find further hesitation on the part of Signor Melegari after Prince Reuss has actually started, to ask his Excellency whether he refrains from placing the diplomatic representation of Italy on its former footing at Constantinople lest it might not be agreeable to Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 350.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(No. 374. Very Confidential.)

Paris, May 11, 1877.

My Lord,

CHALIL PASHA, who is married to a niece of the Khedive, and who is on the worst possible terms with his wife's uncle, asserted to me yesterday that he had in his possession a secret Treaty signed in 1872, by Cheriff Pasha on the part of the Khedive, and by the Russian Consul-General, M. de Lex. Chalil Pasha alleged that in this Treaty it was stipulated that the Khedive should not be required to refuse to send troops to the Sultan in case of war between Turkey and Russia, but that he should give secret instructions to the Commander of the contingent to put himself into communication with the Russian Generals, and to follow their directions with regard to the disposal of the troops under his orders.

On my showing some incredulity, Chalil Pasha said that unfortunately he had left the papers at Constantinople, or he would show them to me.

He went on to insinuate that the Sultan, on the ground of the mal-administration of the Khedive, might not be disinclined to set him aside, and in return for an advance of money to transfer the administration of Egypt to Her Majesty's Government. The Sultan's soverignty of Egypt must, Chalil Pasha thought, be maintained, but Her Majesty's Government might have the powers which were now possessed by the Khedive.

I did not think it desirable to discuss these matters with Chalil Pasha; I cannot, therefore, say whether he looked upon this plan as an ingenious way of entangling England in the defence of the Ottoman Empire, or if he had overlooked the extraordinary position with regard to Russia in which he proposed to take Her Majesty's Government as the administrators of a part of the Ottoman Empire.

I must observe that I do not think very much importance should be attached to the allegations of Chalil Pasha.

I send Mr. Layard to-day a copy of this despatch by the Queen's messenger Harbord.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 351.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May 11, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

PORTE approves proposed regulations for Suez Canal, but reserves decision as to allowing passage of Russian merchant-vessels. Egypt has no other possible means of defending Canal than torpedoes; but if Viceroy can learn from Aden when a Russian man-of-war passes, he will only then lay them down. Chamber of Delegates has voted about 500,000*l.* to pay for assistance to Turkey and about 10,000 men will be sent, making total of the Egyptian contingent about 18,000 men. Three Turkish men-of-war expected immediately to convoy them.

No. 352.

Mr. Erskine to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Stockholm, May 11, 1877.*

THE King has this day applied to the Diet for a credit of 111,000*l.* to enable him, if necessary, to uphold the neutrality of Sweden.

No. 353.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, May 11, 1877.*

IT is said that arms are being sent by Russian to Armenian Christians near Van and other places. Also that the force near Akhalkalaki is moving towards Kars. I cannot vouch for truth of above, but it is worthy of investigation. Grand Duke is here, but will leave soon.

Revolution said to be quieted.

No. 354.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Crete, May 11, 1877*

GENERAL Assembly open yesterday. Three principal Christian members on the part of the rest came to propose this country to be made Principality under British pro-

tection. I have told them that Her Majesty's Government cannot encourage rebellion. Members much concerned at answer.

Insurrection likely.

No. 355.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May* 12, 1877.

THE debate yesterday in the Roumanian Chamber indicates that absolute independence will probably not be pressed at present.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that he considered them at war with the Porte in a defensive sense. Minister President was more advanced in his language.

No. 356.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 12, 1877, 12·45 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I fear that there may be cause for anxiety in Palestine, as there is in many other parts of Turkey, and I am doing all in my power to induce Porte to take measures for security of life and property, but it replies that engaged as it is in a life and death struggle, it is compelled to bring up all the force it can dispose of to the front, and those who brought on the war must be answerable for the consequences. However, I will continue to do my best.

No. 357.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 12, 1877, 12·50 P.M.

MANIFESTO referred to in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday sent home in my No. 417 of the 8th instant.

No. 358.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 12, 1877, 2·30 P.M.

THE Turkish Government states that great battle was fought near Batoum. Turks victorious. Russians lost 4,000 men killed.

No. 359.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, May* 12, 1877.

TURKISH iron-clad near Ibraila blown up by a shell from Russian batteries.

No. 360.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 12, 1877, 6 P.M.

BRITISH shipowners desire to know whether ships in blockaded ports may continue to load up to date of departure. They assume that this was the intention of the Porte. Please ascertain and report.

No. 361.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12, 7 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Paris, May* 12, 1877, 4 P.M.

FRENCH Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that a telegram has passed through Paris to-day from the Emperor Alexander, to his son in America, saying that squadron in which he is serving is ordered to come immediately to Cronstadt, but that to console him for his disappointment, he shall have command in the active army on shore.

No. 362.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Serajevo, May* 12, 1877.

FREEMAN arrived. Affair of Glamotch misrepresented; no bride outraged. Confusion and inaccuracy regarding affairs at Otchievo, which was a known resort of insurgents, and which was attacked because Turks had information that Christians were assembling there to destroy Mussulman villages of Orastritza and Tchukovo. Turks declare they were resisted. Details impossible by telegraph. Full report by next post.

No. 363.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 12, *at night.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May* 12, 1877, 3 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, Porte objects to Viceroy's proposal to authorize passage of Russian merchant-vessels through Suez Canal, and insists on their liability in the Canal, as in all Egyptian ports, to the measures applied to them in the other ports of the Empire.

Porte signifies its readiness to send naval force to Red Sea, if necessary, to protect ports against Russian men-of-war.

Viceroy maintaining his views with respect to the neutrality of the Canal, proposes to remind Porte of Article 14 of the Act of Concession; to say that having no means of defending Canal entrance except by torpedoes, the dangers of which are obvious, if Porte insists on exclusion of Russian merchantmen, it must send ships to enforce its orders.

Meanwhile Russian merchantmen will be allowed to enter, and Viceroy suggests that if Her Majesty's Government approve his view they might support it at Constantinople.

No official notification will be made till this question is settled.

As a matter of fact very few Russian merchantmen use Canal.

No. 364.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

(No. 132.)
My Lord, *Washington, April* 30, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose two copies of an extract from the "New York Herald" of the 27th instant, relative to the duties of the United States' Government as a neutral. It purports to be a communication from Washington, and cites the Three Rules agreed upon by the Treaty of May 8, 1871, between Great Britain and the United States, and the 1st Article of the Convention of July 22, 1854, between Russia and the United States, as the rules of neutrality by which the United States' Government must be guided during the existing war between Russia and Turkey.

The tone of most of the recent articles in the different newspapers is in decided opposition to allowing the Russian vessels of war, now at New York and San Francisco, to make the United States' ports points of departure with a view to overhaul and visit neutral vessels suspected of having left those ports with contraband of war, and I have reason to believe that Mr. Evarts has stated in conversation that the United States' Government would not tolerate such a proceeding.

I understand that the issue of a Proclamation of Neutrality has been under consideration of the President with his Cabinet, but that, as no official communication has as yet been made to the United States' Government of the existence of war between Turkey and Russia by either the one or the other, it has been deemed proper to defer the issue of the Proclamation until such official notice of the war shall be given.

It is stated that on the issue of the Proclamation of Neutrality, the President will, at the same time, transmit orders to revenue and naval officers to use all diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming, or equipping, within American jurisdiction, of any vessels intended to cruise against either of the belligerents, and to prevent either belligerent from using any American port as a base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of recruiting their armies, or augmenting their naval or military supplies.

It has been suggested by some of the newspapers that, in the event of Great Britain becoming a belligerent, it would be good policy on the part of the United States to modify her navigation laws so as to allow the merchant-vessels to carry the American flag, from which it is supposed that great advantage would accrue to the commerce of the United States.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

Inclosure in No. 364.

Extract from the "New York Herald" of April 27, 1877.

THE duties of the United States as a neutral Government are summed up in the Three Rules of Article VI of the Treaty of Washington, which Rules are as follows :—

1st. To use diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction, to warlike use.

2nd. Not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men.

3rd. To exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and, as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any infringement of the foregoing obligations and duties.

By a proviso at the close of the Article, England and the United States have not only bound themselves to the above definition of the duties of a neutral, but agreed to bring the Rules to the knowledge of other maritime nations, and to invite them to accede to them.

By the Treaty of 1854 between Russia and the United States, it was agreed, by Article I :—

1st. That free ships make free goods—that is to say, that the effects or goods belonging to subjects or citizens of a Power or State at war are free from capture and confiscation when found on board of neutral vessels, with the exception of articles contraband of war.

2nd. That the property of neutrals on board an enemy's vessel is not subject to confiscation unless the same be contraband of war.

They (the two Contracting Powers) engage to apply these principles to the commerce and navigation of all such Powers and States as shall consent to adopt them on their part as permanent and immutable. This Treaty was also signed at Washington, the signatories being Messrs. William L. Marcy and the Baron Stoeckel.

No. 365.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 44. Political.) *Galatz, May 7, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Grand Duke Nicholas arrived at Galatz yesterday morning at 3 A.M.; at 9 A.M. he visited Reni, whence he returned and passed on

to Ibraila about 3 P.M. At this time a Turkish iron-clad was firing at the batteries and railway station of Ibraila. She fired some eight or ten shot, but without doing any damage to speak of, although her armament is heavy; she left her position at Guetchid last night, passing up the Matchin branch of the Danube towards Hirsova, perhaps fearing that the depth of water might diminish, and her retreat be cut off.

The iron-clad that came up the river on the 4th May towards Reni appears to be a sister-ship to the "Lutfi Djelil"; she came up so rapidly that it seemed improbable (at this distance, where only her funnel was visible) that she could be a war-ship. On her approaching Reni she fired a shot or two, when two batteries above opened fire; she retired, and afterwards kept moving backwards and forwards, firing from time to time at the batteries below, but keeping out of range of the field-pieces there, which, after a short time, did not respond. The Turkish shells, for the greater part, do not burst, and but very little damage has been done.

The Russians at present do not appear to have any heavy guns in position, but fourteen, at least, have arrived lately, of which six are at Barbosch, four at Ibraila, and four at Reni.

Troops continue to arrive and pass on towards Ibraila, whence there is a continual passage towards Janca. They have large trains of carts, &c., with them, and I hear that on entering Roumania they brought with them twenty-one days' provisions. Mr. Vice-Consul Brown writes that waggons with bridge works have passed Ibraila, and bridge work is going on outside, but that as it progresses it somehow disappears, and he has hopes that the passage will not take place from Ibraila. Several rafts have passed Galatz to-day going down the river, and stop near the railway station. The Russians report having placed torpedoes above Ibraila.

The Italian Consul, who arrived this morning, informed me that he had seen on the road several wagons with cases, which he felt certain contained Whitehead torpedoes, and as he has just come from Fiume, where there is a large factory of these torpedoes, he is not likely to be mistaken.

The water continues high, there are considerable floods, and there seems a probability of more rain shortly. The villages of Yatoka and Yaghe (opposite) have been flooded, and their inhabitants have come over to this side: from Pesika several families have arrived; this village stands too high to be inundated at present, but one of the refugees stated yesterday that first came the Circassians, who robbed them, and afterwards the Laz, who began to maltreat and murder them. It appeared curious that none of them should be wounded, and on inquiry it appears that some Cossacks went over and burnt the Turkish guard-house; seeing this the people took fright, seized the pontoons over the old course of the Danube, and came over here. Some of them now wish to go back to bring over their cattle.

On the 2nd May there were only about 2,000 Russian troops at Ismail, the rest having left for Satanov, opposite Isaakcha.

The Grand Duke Nicholas left this morning for Jassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 366.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 12, 1877, 7 P.M.*

FOLLOWING received from Military Secretary, dated Erzeroum, Saturday 10 A.M.:—

"Arrived here Thursday sunset. Saw Governor yesterday and this morning. Russians still halting before the forts, but have occupied Bayazid and Kagisman. They are very probably prevented by snow from concerted advance.

"The passes, I am told, will not be fully open for ten or fifteen days. Turkish forces defend passes near Penek, Bardek, Millidoz, and Delibaba, with position at Toprak Kalé; in all, about 35 battalions.

"At Ardahan are 10 battalions, and at Kars 30 battalions. Fall of Ardahan apprehended. Will learn further particulars from Sultan's Aide-de-camp just arrived from Bardek. After inspection of fortifications here, propose to post to Bardek. Works reported deficient at all points."

No. 367.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

Constantinople, May 12, 1877

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum, dated to-day, 2 P.M.:—

"Snow and swollen rivers have proved too serious obstacles. Russian left wing has fallen back from Aintab road and was near Enelielice two days since. A column was detached to occupy Kargisman, about 8,000 holding Bayazid.

"Communication by telegraph re-established with Kars on 9th. Russians have withdrawn from Chiplaklee to Touragel. Right wing is advancing. Circassians committing great excesses on roads, ill-treating Mahomedans and Christians, and authorities. Villages begin to be deserted on line of march close to Erzeroum. Provisions scarce at Diguir in Soganlee. Authorities here being hard pressed to furnish are exhausting the town, and inhabitants are beginning to feel the pressure."

No. 368.

Sir J. Walsham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

Madrid, May 12, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

A SHORT Proclamation enjoining on Spanish subjects in Spain or abroad the strictest neutrality in the war between Russia and Turkey has been published in the "Gazette" of to-day. Recruiting for the army or navy of either belligerant in Spanish territory, whether by Spanish or foreign agents, is strictly prohibited. A copy of the Proclamation will be sent by post.

No. 369.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13, 5 P.M.)

Cairo, May 13, 1877, 11 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

DECISION taken last night to apply orders of the Porte respecting treatment of neutral and enemies' shipping in other ports of the Empire to the Suez Canal. Police of the Canal, including right of visit and search, will be exercised by Egypt.

Porte asked to send naval force to guard both ends of Canal if they maintain decision to stop Russian men-of-war and merchantmen, as Egypt has not the means.

Porte reminded at the same time of the 14th Article of the Act of Concession of 1856, respecting neutrality of the Suez Canal.

No. 370.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

Constantinople, May 12, 1877, 11 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the distinct promises given to me, Shefket Pasha was named to a command at Erzeroum. I at once protested most energetically, and demanded that his appointment should be immediately cancelled. This has been done to-day.

No. 371.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

Tiflis, May 13, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TURKS should take care water-supply is not cut from Kars. Communicate Constantinople.

No. 372.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret and Confidential.) *Constantinople, May* 13, 1877, 11 A.M.

SULTAN last week informed his Ministers that he was determined that his Christian subjects should be placed on a complete equality with his Mussulman subjects, and that they should consequently be called upon to serve in the army.

It was yesterday decided in Council of Ministers that the measure should be at once adopted. I attach to this determination, which has been communicated to me most confidentially, great importance.

No. 373.

*The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.**

Foreign Office, May 13, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

MR. LAYARD reports that Porte has ordered Commander-in-chief to allow British tugs and lighters to retire, if possible, into Austrian waters. He is to confer on the subject with Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk.

No. 374.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 204. Very Confidential.)

St. Petersburgh, April 27, 1877.

My Lord,

SINCE all hopes of a pacific arrangement have been abandoned, and war has been declared by Russia against Turkey, the uncertainty which has so long and so heavily weighed on trade and the financial interests has been somewhat removed, and even the Russian funds have become firmer.

This may be in some measure attributed to the hopes entertained by the commercial and moneyed classes, that the war will be localized, and that it will be of short duration. I have reason to think that these hopes are participated in by the Emperor; but in the higher classes of society, however, a somewhat different feeling is beginning to perforate, and the Muscovite dream of possessing Constantinople appears to be reviving.

The language reported to me of Russian society in general, although representing no official character, leads to the supposition that the hope, if not the intention, is entertained that the Russian army will avoid, as far as may be possible, small engagements, and, after a pitched battle in the plain, push forward with concentrated forces to Constantinople.

I cannot think that the Emperor participates in this wish or intention; but circumstances of necessity may overcome the best intentions, and may render the Emperor powerless to arrest the march of a victorious army and the cry of an enthusiastic nation.

I have thought it my duty to report to your Lordship the ambitious hopes foreshadowed by the language of Russian society, which may be encouraged and possibly realized by fortuitous circumstances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 375.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 206.)

St. Petersburgh, April 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive at 9 P.M. last evening your Lordship's telegram instructing me to ask the Russian Government whether they considered the present state of their relations with Turkey as constituting a state of war.

* Repeated to Consul Sanderson.

I accordingly addressed immediately an official note to Prince Gortchakow, copy of which I have the honour to annex, making the inquiry referred to, and within an hour I received from his Highness a private note in reply, copy of which I annex, stating that the Imperial Government were "incontestably in a state of war with Turkey."

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 375.

Lord A. Loftus to Prince Gortchakow.

St. Petersburgh, April 26, 1877.

Mon Prince,

I AM instructed by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to ask the Imperial Government whether they consider the present state of their relations with Turkey as constituting a state of war. In requesting your Highness to enable me to reply to this instruction, I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 375.

Prince Gortchakow to Lord A. Loftus.

St. Pétersbourg, le 14 Avril, 1877.

My dear Lord,

NOUS sommes incontestablement en état de guerre avec la Turquie. Veuillez agréer cette réponse laconique.

(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

No. 376.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 227.)

St. Petersburgh, May 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD an interview with Prince Gortchakow this morning, when I communicated to his Highness your Lordship's despatch No. 160 of the 1st instant, and placed a copy of it in his hands.

On reading the paragraph which states "Prince Gortchakow, however, asserts that all opening is now closed for attempts at conciliation; that the Emperor has resolved to undertake the task of obtaining by coercion that which the unanimous efforts of all the Powers have failed to obtain by persuasion; and he expresses His Imperial Majesty's conviction that this step is in accordance with the sentiments and the interests of Europe." Prince Gortchakow observed that the term "step" used by your Lordship would seem to refer to the "war," whereas it signified the "object" as being in accordance with the sentiments and interests of Europe. When I had finished reading the despatch his Highness said that being anxious to avoid a polemical discussion which could lead to no good result, it was not his intention, unless the Emperor should order otherwise, to make any rejoinder.

His Highness made no further observations, and received the communication with calmness and in a friendly mood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 377.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 17. Political.)

Canea, Crete, April 28, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is again my duty to report to your Lordship two more meetings of Christians in the sub-districts of Milopotamos and Amarion, both in the district of Rethymo, convened

for the purpose of taking the oath of brotherhood. At the former appeared 1,500, and at the latter 500 men. These gatherings have latterly become of such ordinary occurrence that I should no longer feel myself called on to make a special report of them, were it not that at the former the motives which have prompted them received additional explanation. It appears that the Kaïmakam of Milopotamos sent his mouavin (assistant) to call on the people to disperse, inasmuch as the gathering of such a multitude was calculated to alarm the inhabitants. To this they replied, that as the Government had not the power to protect them or to enforce obedience to the laws, they were obliged in self-defence to protect themselves by entering into an oath of brotherhood not to injure each other. It becomes increasingly evident that this is the true explanation of the gatherings in question. In times of excitement like the present when the arm of authority has lost its vigour, the people are exposed to the depredations of cattle-lifters and sheep-stealers, and as no sort of redress can be had from the Courts of Law, a system of retaliation is the consequence. To obviate this evil, the peasants have been induced for their common interests to take an oath not to steal from or injure one another. Without denying their use in furthering political objects, these meetings appear to me to have been on the whole productive of good rather than of evil, as there cannot be a doubt that but for the solemnity of the compact entered into, the island would by this time have drifted into anarchy. They are a symptom and not a cause of the disturbed state of society, and if in former years they have been the precursors of insurrection, so are they likely to be so again, because the same causes at work then are equally active now.

The news of the declaration of war has not had the effect of heightening the enthusiasm of the Turks. On the contrary, they only now seem to realize the gigantic nature of the struggle into which they have entered, and their confident boasting has suddenly ceased. The Mussulman rabble indulge occasionally in insults to the Christian townspeople, and only yesterday several Christians from the country were beaten as they entered the town. On going to the Governor for redress, his Excellency bade them make their complaints to the Courts in the usual form. Knowing by experience what treatment they were likely to meet with there, they curtly replied that another time they would take measures to protect themselves. Two or three cases of robbery and violence committed by the regular troops posted in the interior are also reported, but they are not of a serious nature.

I hear that last Sunday prayers were offered up in several country churches for the success of the Russian arms in the war, which then had not been declared. The Christians are heart and soul with that Power, as they would be with any declared enemy of the Porte. I refrain from repeating what I stated in my last despatch as to the sore feeling created by the opposition of Her Majesty's Government to Russia's warlike intentions. There is no other Power which the Cretans respect so highly as England, by reason of its free institutions and its general character for justice; and persuaded that their future lot depends more on the policy of that country than of any other Power, they watch with the more anxiety any indication of that policy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 378.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 3. Political. Confidential.)

Corfu, May 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE been allowed by my Ottoman colleague to read and take copy of the inclosed, recently received by him from Samih Pasha, Governor of Crete.

I would fain hope that the Pasha's flattering picture of the disposition of the Cretans to remain quiet in spite of the active exertions being made by revolutionary societies to stir them up to rebellion, is not overdrawn.

I regret, however, to have to remark that if the police in Crete are not more faithful to their duties than the police in Epirus, but small reliance can be placed on their vigilance, or on the accuracy of their reports to their superiors.

No later than last week ten barrels of gunpowder, shipped at Corfu, were landed over night on the opposite coast almost within range of the guns of the guardship stationed at the southern entrance of the channel, about 20 miles from hence.

I beg to add that with Conemenos Bey's permission I have shown Samih Pasha's letter to Admiral Hornby who, with the squadron under his command, is still in port.

Conemenos Bey, I may state, was at one time Governor of Samos, and, subsequently, First Secretary to the Ottoman Embassy at St. Petersburgh and Chargé d'Affaires.

He informs me that when at St. Pettrsburgh, years ago, he warned his Government of the Panslavistic intrigues for revolutionizing the Slav provinces of Turkey, but that no attention whatever was vouchsafed to his oft repeated warnings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure in No. 378.

Samih Pasha to Conémenos Bey.

Excellence, *La Crète, le $\frac{4}{16}$ Avril*, 1877.

J'AI reçu la lettre que votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'écrire sous le No. 673, et la date du $\frac{17}{29}$ Mars, accompagnée de la copie de son rapport, adressé, en date du $\frac{19}{31}$ Mars, au Ministère Impérial des Affaires Etrangères, concernant les affaires Crétoises.

Avant tout, je crois de mon devoir de remercier votre Excellence des félicitations qu'elle a bien voulu m'adresser à l'occasion de ma nomination en Crète, et de lui dire combien je suis désireux de rendre plus intimes encore les excellents rapports de service qui n'ont cessé d'exister pendant ma précédente Administration, entre le Consulat-Général Impérial à Corfou et le Gouvernement-Général de cette île.

J'ai lu avec un intérêt tout particulier les renseignements que votre Excellence a pu obtenir par son agent secret sur la situation des esprits en Crète.

A mon arrivé à la Canée je me suis empressé de m'enquérir de l'état actuel de l'île.

A la suite des renseignements qui m'ont été fournis, il résulte, qu'indépendamment de divers individus imbus d'intentions malveillantes envers le Gouvernement Impérial, le reste de la population Chrétienne de l'île ne semble pas disposée de pactiser avec les fauteurs de troubles, et qu'il n'y a point, pour le moment, aucun indice d'un mouvement quelconque tendant à renverser l'ordre des choses établi en Crète.

On m'assure aussi qu'il n'y a point de l'agitation dans l'île, que les habitants s'occupent paisiblement de leurs travaux agricoles, et que les nouvelles alarmantes qui circulent depuis quelque temps, dans les journaux d'Athènes, au sujet d'une soi-disante effervescence en Crète, n'est rien autre que l'œuvre isolée de quelques malveillants, qui dans un but d'intérêt privé, s'efforcent de profiter des circonstances pour créer des embarras aux autorités locales.

Du reste, en consultant les vœux des habitants, il est très facile de se convaincre que les Crétois Chrétiens ne partagent pas l'opinion des malveillants dont il est question.

Je puis assurer votre Excellence que depuis mon arrivé en Crète, je n'ai entendu de la part des habitants que des témoignages de dévouement envers le Gouvernement Impérial. Le désir manifeste du peuple Crétois, c'est de vivre paisiblement, et de repousser toute action qui pourrait compromettre la sécurité publique, et de rechercher les moyens nécessaires à augmenter leur bien-être.

Dans tous les districts de l'île les autorités administratives ont commencé à procéder aux élections; j'ai la satisfaction d'annoncer à votre Excellence que les élections se poursuivent dans les districts, dans un ordre parfait, et que je me prépare à l'ouverture prochaine de l'Assemblée Générale annuelle Crétoise.

Comme la Russie travaille sous-main pour susciter partout des difficultés aux autorités locales, il est probable que des agents secrets Russes, ainsi que de l'argent, aient été expédiés dans ce but en Crète.

Il est à observer que depuis un certain temps les côtes désertes de l'île sont bien surveillées par un cordon de gendarmerie qui se trouvent placés sur divers points suspects, des bateaux de l'état détachés de la flotte de l'Archipel font aussi de temps en temps des excursions autour de l'île.

Quoiqu'il en soit nous avons actuellement une force militaire suffisante dans l'île pour pouvoir faire face à toute éventualité, et des ordres sévères ont été adressés de nouveau au Gouverneur de l'île de redoubler d'efforts pour pouvoir maintenir l'ordre publique et la tranquillité.

En réitérant mes remercîments à votre Excellence, et en la priant de vouloir bien continuer à me tenir au courant de tout ce qui parviendrait à sa connaissance touchant les affaires de Crète.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) SAMIH.

No. 379.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 4. Political.)

My Lord, *Corfu, May 8*, 1877.

I REGRET extremely that my report (Political No. 3) of the 3rd instant was late for the post of that day; I now do myself the honour to forward it.

I was equally unfortunate as regards the inclosed telegram from Santa Maura transmitted in cypher (private), but so blundered as to be quite unintelligible; I have since received it in decipher, together with a private report from Mr. Onofrio, dated the 29th April, copy of which I beg to transmit.

There is too much reason to fear that mischief is brewing on the Acarnanian frontier, and that Colonel Grivas, who remained at his residence just opposite Santa Maura, instead of attending in his place during the last sitting of the Athenian Parliament, is at the head of it.

The gentlemen who waited on Mr. Onofrio with a request that he would apply to me for a British gunboat to protect the town of Santa Maura, against an anticipated attack on the part of the Turks—are among the most influential in the island. They were, one and all, active fomentors of the raid of 1854, for which they got severely pulled up by me. This circumstance they now find it convenient to forget. I think of instructing Mr. Onofrio, by way of answer to their request, to read Her Majesty's Proclamation to them, and also to intimate to them in mild terms that their best defence will be found in keeping civil tongues in their heads and by abstaining from stirring up their dependents to another anti-Turkish raid—an advice which I feel pretty sure they wont listen to. For anything else, the Admiral has no small ships of war at his disposal, for detached service, at Santa Maura or any other point in Greek waters.

The Russian Consul at Jannina, with his entire staff, has sought a refuge here for the present. My Russian colleague, Jadowsky, who had been absent from his post for nine months past, has also returned. An Epirote merchant, resident at Corfu, and an out-and-out Russian partizan, went down to Santa Maura a few days ago. By next mail from thence I shall doubtless hear something of his doings.

From the Albanian side we have constant reports of the ill-treatment of the Christians by the Turkish soldiery. In the immediate vicinity of Jannina, a number of women returning from a church festival were seized and brutally violated by a party of Bashi-Bazouks. The officer in command, who did all in his power to prevent the outrage, got severely wounded for his pains.

But the most serious affair of all is the escape from the Prison of Jannina of the notorious brigand Stoupa and other associate brigands and criminals, who are said to have made for the Greek frontier. Of the escape of these ruffians from prison there is no doubt. We shall probably hear more about their exploits at an early day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 379.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

(Telegraphic.) *Santa Maura, April 29*, 1877.

AM informed all is ready at Gulia, as in 1854, to help proposed insurrection in Epirus should Candia revolt or events turn against Turks. Further particulars in despatch.

Inclosure 2 in No. 379.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

(Confidential.)

Dear Sir, *Santa Maura, April 29*, 1877.

THE events of the week, as might be expected, caused a considerable excitement here.

It is generally believed that disturbances in the adjoining provinces would certainly break out if a battle is lost by the Turks, or if the signal of revolt is given by Crete.

A functionary, whose opinion I had had occasion to sound, after the receipt of the news of the declaration of war, told me "that Greece would find herself in a very difficult position should the Cretans revolt, as a revolution in that island would soon be followed by another in Epirus, &c. However much the Greek Government might desire to observe a strict neutrality during the Turco-Russian struggle, how would it be possible for them to remain passive spectators at such a juncture? If we would abandon our brethren to their own fate," he added, "our prestige would be destroyed, and it should be remembered that it is not our intention to give up our idea."

I have, moreover, ascertained that the Eparch himself, in a conversation with one of my colleagues, held nearly the same language.

From such a language held by persons occupying a high position in the Government of this Island, and who are supposed to know what is in the wind, one might infer that a game is being played, and that disturbances will ere long break out in these parts.

Since writing the above, I have been informed that everything is being ready in Acarnania to help a revolt in Epirus, and to carry on an irregular warfare as in 1854. The name of Colonel Grivas is mentioned to me as the leader. I cannot ascertain how far my informant may be correct in his report; but if the report is correct, the language of the officials above alluded to would need no further comment. Should I hear anything further worth reporting, I shall wire, in cypher.

Just this moment Messrs. Valaority, the poet, Marco Farlambà, Dracopoulos, Georgio Calcani, and Demetrio Conidari, waited upon me to say how desirable the presence of an English gunboat in this port would be, "in view of the disturbances which are likely to break out in the neighbouring provinces of Turkey—a deplorable occurrence—which might expose this defenceless town to the anger of the Turks."

One might suspect that it is attempted to conspire under the shield of the British flag! At any rate it is indeed apprehended in town that something of the sort might happen if disturbances break out. In submitting to your consideration the wish expressed by the above-named gentlemen, who added that it was shared by the respectable class of Leucadians, and although I do not exclude the possibility of the apprehended molestation on the part of fanatic Moslems in a moment of exasperation, there is really no cause at the present moment for alarm, the mischievous reports spread against the authorities and Moslem inhabitants of Epirus by certain people here—reports which a note just received from Mr. Blakeney declares to be completely groundless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS ONOFRIO.

No. 380.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 17.)
My Lord, *Tunis, May* 7, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the receipt of a telegram from the Grand Vizier announcing that Russia had declared war against Turkey, and inviting the Bey to send a contingent of troops, His Highness held a Grand Council, composed of all the members of his Government, of the corps of the Ulemas, the notables, the chiefs of Corporations, as well as the Kaïd or Governor of the Israelite community, and the two Chief Rabbis, to take into consideration the demand of the Porte.

The autograph letter of the Sultan, of which the Bey's Envoy was the bearer, was read in the Council. His Majesty, in referring to the imminence of a war between Turkey and Russia, distinctly states that the object of the former Power is the destruction of Islam; that Russia has persistently pursued that object for a long period of years, and as no concessions will ever induce her to forego it, His Majesty, conjointly with the whole nation, had resolved to resist any further concessions which only tended to the accomplishment of the object of her enemy. It was, therefore, an imperative no less than a sacred duty on the part of all Mahommedans to unite their strenuous efforts, in case of need, in the defence of their religion and country, which was so seriously threatened.

The two principal Mahommedan rites in this Regency are the Hanafiyeh and the Melekiyeh. The Bey, the members of his Government, and the great majority of the sedentary population appertain to the former, and the Arabs to the latter rite.

The Bash Mufti, or chief legal and ecclesiastical authority of the Hanafiyeh, gave it as his deliberate opinion that, according to the precepts of their religion, they were bound to afford all possible aid, in men and money, to the Sultan or Caliph; and it was therefore incumbent upon them to obey the summons they had received.

The Cady, or Judge of the Melkiyeh, said that, although he did not question the duty which their religious precepts imposed upon them, yet there were conditions attached to that duty which he was prepared to prove if necessary. The succours to be furnished must be in proportion to the means of the people. Owing to the partial failure of the crops last year, and their complete failure this year in the south of the Regency, the people were reduced to great penury and distress. Under these sad circumstances it would be unjust to levy an extraordinary tax, but, at the same time, it was the embounden duty of the salaried functionaries of the Government to largely contribute towards a fund in aid of the Turkish armies, who are fighting in defence of their Sovereign, of their country, and of their sacred creed.

The Prime Minister having observed that the salaries of the public servants was the price of the services they rendered to the State, the Cady replied that the salaries they receive should be commensurate with, and not in excess of, the duties they performed; independently of which, it must be borne in mind that the State and the people were the contributors to their (the public servants') riches; and it was but just that, in an emergency of so grave a character, they should relieve the people from any fresh burden by the abandonment of a portion of their fixed income.

One of the notables remarked that it was incorrect to say that this Regency had not rendered any service to the Porte. It lost its fleet at Navarino, and had furnished its contingent during the Crimean War. It formed, besides, one of the extremities of the Ottoman dominions in the proximity of Europe; and he considered that, by the maintenance of friendly and pacific relations with the Continental Powers, it has, and is still, rendering an eminent service to the Turkish Government.

It was finally decided to again open a voluntary subscription in aid of the Turkish armies.

In a conversation with the Prime Minister relative to the above subject, he mentioned the utter penury of the Tunisian treasury, the present indigence of the population, and the difficulty of furnishing a contingent of Nizam, when the Government had only about 2,000 men under arms for police purposes. It was true that they had some irregular troops, but he doubted whether they would consent to enlist as volunteers and whether they were capable of rendering any effective service against a regular and a well-disciplined army. The position of the Government was a very perplexing one, and he, therefore, conceived that, in view of the existing unfavourable state of things, it would be more practicable, and, perhaps, more acceptable to the Porte, to collect and send as much money as the country could afford.

Owing to successive failures of the crops, and consequent stagnation of trade, both the public revenue and the resources of the people have been greatly reduced; but I do not fail, notwithstanding the actual unsatisfactory condition of Tunis, to urge upon his Excellency's attention the necessity of assisting the Sultan by every means in the power of the Government, lest the Bey should be accused of withholding his co-operation in a war, upon the result of which depended the future fate of Turkey, and with it the fate of the Mahommedan States connected with the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 381.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 18.)
My Lord, *Tunis, May* 8, 1877.

IT may not be out of place to respectfully submit that, from all I have been able to observe, the perplexity of the Tunisian Government as to the line of conduct it should pursue in the war between Russia and Turkey is partly due to the apprehensions which the foreign Agents, with scarcely an exception, have created in the minds of the Bey and of his Minister of a sudden attack or bombardment of the "Goletta" by the Russian squadron in the Mediterranean, in the event that His Highness should take an open and an active part in the war against the Porte's enemy.

However improbable such a contingency may be, it cannot but have a certain degree of influence when similar apprehensions are expressed by agents, who are supposed to be in a more favourable position than the Tunisian Government to foresee eventualities, be it on account of the information they receive from their Governments, or by reason of their superior sagacity and foresight.

This perplexity would have been more easily combated and overcome were it not for other circumstances that intervene to superadd to the embarrassments of the Government,

namely, the impoverished condition to which this country has been reduced for the last two years, owing to a drought which has not only caused partial failure of the crops, but has also destroyed from 40 to 60 per cent. the cattle which form the riches of the Arabs.

No doubt the Bey and his Government deeply feel the dilemma in which they are placed. As Mahommedans, they are more than anxious to co-operate in a war which the Sultan himself declares to be a religious one waged by Russia for the destruction of the supremacy of their sacred creed. And, while it is their imperative duty to defend it, they find themselves in the presence of circumstances over which they have but little control. They have besides to take into consideration the counsels that reach them from the exterior, lest those counsels should be based upon the political exigencies of those who give them, and by their neglect to follow them they should open the door to aggression in case of future combinations, which they cannot possibly foresee.

Such is, in brief, the situation of affairs here at the present. And it would be premature to offer an opinion as to the changes that time and events might produce in the decisions and action of the Tunisian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 382.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 191. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, May* 9, 1877.

IN obedience to your Lordship's despatch No. 162 of the 3rd instant, I communicated to the German Minister for Foreign Affairs your despatch No. 160 of the 1st instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, in answer to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 19th ultimo; and in thanking your Lordship for this communication, his Excellency said he would submit the despatch to the Emperor, but he did not personally express any opinion on its contents.

The despatch has since been published, and has produced considerable sensation in Berlin, because it is understood to indicate the intention of England to go to war with Russia.

This impression appears also to be derived from the fact that the correspondents in England of the commercial and financial houses in Germany assert that active preparations for war are being made by the War Office and the Admiralty, and that hostilities may be expected to commence early in August.

I am also assured that diplomatists at home have written in a similar sense to their respective Governments abroad.

These impressions, which are often anxiously discussed, I invariably meet by stating that, while Her Majesty's Government desire to reserve their liberty of action and to be neutral, they must at the same time be prepared to defend the interests of England if even they should be threatened in Asia and Egypt, on the Bosphorus, and elsewhere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 383.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 195. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, May* 12, 1877.

THE new German Ambassador Henry VII Prince Reuss is to take possession of the Russian Embassy House on arriving at Constantinople, and to live there for the present at the request of the Czar.

His intimate personal relations with the Russian Imperial family, and his long residence at St. Petersburgh, have led to much friendly intercourse with the statesmen of Russia, so that his sympathies are probably not very strongly enlisted on the side of Turkey, but he is possessed of a clear, calm, and impartial judgment, and his abilities warrant the general belief that he will later hold high office in Germany.

The impression, among persons who are able to know, is that Prince Bismarck recommended his appointment to the Emperor, with the view to turning the personal influence

to account which Prince Reuss will be able to exercise on his Russian friends when peace negotiations are in contemplation, or a discussion of future arrangements has again become possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 384.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 196. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, May* 12, 1877.

THE friends of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern are elated at the turn things are taking in Roumania, because they say he will be made a King by the Czar when the war is over.

Persons less interested in his promotion think his tenure of Roumania uncertain, and that if other arrangements are in contemplation he may be asked to resign.

These opinions are of course mere speculation, and not based on any true knowledge of the ultimate intentions of Russia.

As far as I have been able to ascertain Prince Bismarck does not care one way or the other what becomes of Prince Charles, and his family will be very much guided by the wishes of the Czar in regard to his future destiny.

In no case would the German Government give him any material assistance if he should ever apply for it, so that, on the whole, I should say that he has no more to hope from Russia than from Germany.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 385.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(No. 213 A. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, April* 29, 1877.

I THINK it my duty to inform your Lordship that Prince Gortchakow, in talking lately to one of my colleagues of the relations with Persia, expressed no wish for Persian active co-operation in the war against Turkey.

His Highness observed that the Persian troops would be rather an embarrassment, and probably also an expense, than of any practical utility, adding that they might possibly also bring the plague with them into the Russian camp.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 386.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Constantinople, May* 13, 1877.

I AM very secretly informed that the Porte proposes to land 10,000 Circassians on Circassian coast, with the object of raising the population and attempting to cut off the Russian lines of communication.

Hobart Pasha would command the expedition if undertaken.

No. 387.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 13, 1877.

THE news of considerable Turkish success over the Russians near Batoum is confirmed. It was achieved by Turkish irregulars, who are stated to have completely cut off Russian column.

In the Danube the largest Turkish ironclad has been blown up by accident, and the whole crew of 190 men, with the exception of three, killed.

No. 388.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14, 1·45 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May 14, 1877, 12·5 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, torpedo idea is abandoned, and the defence of the Suez Canal entirely left to the Porte if it maintains its decision, gravity of which is pointed out.

No. 389.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14, 7 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 14, 1877, 1·30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from General Kemball, dated yesterday, Sunday, midday:—

"There should be no delusion. Without money and without efficient control the prospect is hopeless for the Turks.

"Their plans and resolutions unexceptionally all unexecuted and beyond their power. Position here very strong, and earth defences, as far as they go, well done, but outer line to east side hardly commenced. Approach by Olti road quite undefended.

"Notwithstanding official assurances, I am credibly informed that neither guns, nor munitions, nor provisions, are stored to sustain siege.

"Turkish position on Toganlidagh very precarious.

"Russian reconnaissances indicate plan to turn Delibaba by Getshewan Pass and Bardeck by Pennick prior to direct advance. If successful, Turks must relinquish lines Toganlidagh or have their retreat interrupted.

"Earthworks at Keuprekeui to cover retreat (where?) Bardeck road meets not even commenced yet. Telegram just received. Pray keep any of the three officers you may require."

No. 390.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 14, 1877.*

PORTE does not pretend to interfere with ships lying in a blockaded harbour. They are free to load if they choose, provided they do not carry contraband of war and leave blockaded harbours within term granted, namely 17th instant.

No. 391.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 173. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 14, 1877.*

COUNT BEUST informed me to-day, confidentially, that he had received instructions, if he should be questioned as to the opinion of the Austro-Hungarian Government respecting the declaration of independence which was expected to be made by Roumania, to reply in the following terms:—

That the existing international relations of Roumania have been established by Treaties; that, consequently, if the Principality should of its own initiative declare itself independent, the result would be an alteration of rights *de facto*, but not *de jure* so long as the consent of the Signatory Powers was wanting; that the question thus raised was one the solution of which must be deferred; and that it was a matter of course that, until a new state of things on a legal basis should be established, the Treaty stipulations would remain in force.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 391*.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 244.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 10, 1877.*

ON the receipt of your Lordship's instructions, I addressed a note to Prince Gortchakow, of which I have the honour to annex a copy, informing his Highness that the Porte, having consented to the Russian subjects residing in Turkey being placed under the protection of Germany, had renewed their request for Turkish subjects residing in Russia to be placed under the protection of Great Britain, which, having been acceded to by Her Majesty's Government, I requested to know whether it would be agreeable to the Imperial Government.

I have the honour to inclose copy of Prince Gortchakow's reply, assenting to this proposal.

I have notified this by telegraph to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Odessa, and Her Majesty's Consul at Tiflis, and have likewise addressed a Circular, of which a copy is inclosed, to Her Majesty's Consuls in Russia, instructing them to use their good offices in behalf of Turkish subjects, should the necessity arise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 391*.

Lord A. Loftus to Prince Gortchakow.

Mon Prince, *St. Petersburgh, April 27/May 9, 1877.*

I HAVE been informed by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the Turkish Government, who have now agreed to allow Russian subjects to remain in Turkey under German protection, have renewed their request that their subjects in Russia may be placed under British protection.

I have now the honour to acquaint your Highness that Her Majesty's Government have assented to the request of the Turkish Government, and to beg that your Highness will inform me whether this will be agreeable to the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 391*.

Prince Gortchakow to Lord A. Loftus.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *St. Pétersbourg, le 28 Avril, 1877.*

EN réponse à la dépêche du 27 Avril/9 Mai, par laquelle votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'informer que le Gouvernement Ottoman avait renouvelé auprès du Cabinet Britannique la demande de se charger de la protection des sujets Turcs en Russie, je me fais un devoir de vous réitérer notre consentement déjà exprimé lors les premières ouvertures à ce sujet.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

Inclosure 3 in No. 391*.

Circular addressed by Lord A. Loftus to Her Majesty's Consuls in Russia.

Sir, *St. Petersburgh, May 10, 1877.*

THE Ottoman Government having reconsidered their decision in regard to the residence of Russian subjects in Turkey, have renewed their request for the protection by Her Majesty's Government of Ottoman subjects in Russia.

Her Majesty's Government have accepted this charge with the consent of the Imperial Government. I have therefore to instruct you to consider my Circular Instruction of the 30th ultimo as in force.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 392.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 123. Political.)

My Lord, *Cettigné, April* 30, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 122 of yesterday, inclosing copy of a letter which I had received from Prince Nicholas, I think it as well to state that, as I had anticipated, and had done my best to prevent, the fact of my declining to accompany His Highness to the field has been adroitly used by M. Yonine to make the Prince believe that England has no further interest in him or his fortunes. The result of the irritation thus produced, which I am sure will be but temporary, was that on the day before yesterday His Highness was markedly cold in his manner towards me, and that he took the most significant means to show that he was annoyed, by neglecting to give me intimation of his arrangements for departure. He called on Colonel Thömmel at the Hotel, and, instead of passing on to my room, left the house without visiting me, and, later in the morning, sent an Aide-de-camp to the Colonel to summon him to say farewell, but vouchsafed me no message whatever.

I was not, therefore, one of those who assisted at the parting scene, and the Prince left Cettigné without my taking leave of him.

This morning I asked for a farewell audience of Princess Milena, and in the course of conversation Her Highness assured me of what I am convinced are the Prince's real sentiments in regard to me, and of the regret which they both feel at my departure.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 393.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 124. Political.)

My Lord, *Ragusa, May* 1, 1877.

I ARRIVED at Ragusa this morning, and have requested M. Durando, the Italian Consul, to take charge of the Consular archives until the arrival of Mr. St. John.

The archives of my special mission and the cyphers belonging to the Ragusa Consulate will be conveyed by me to Vienna, and deposited at the Embassy pending Mr. St. John's stay at Belgrade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 394.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 125. Political.)

My Lord, *Ragusa, May* 1, 1877.

THE Italian Government has decided upon establishing a permanent Consulate at Ragusa, and has appointed M. Durando to the post.

That gentleman informs me that his salary is to be 20,000 francs a-year, and that all further expenses caused by his being accredited as Diplomatic Agent in Montenegro will be defrayed by the Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 395.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 433.)
My Lord, *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

I COMMUNICATED to-day to Baron Orczy the substance of your Lordship's telegram to Mr. Layard dated yesterday, instructing him to endeavour to obtain a prolongation of the days of grace allowed in the notification of the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea, and I inquired also at the same time whether the Austro-Hungarian Government would join in the representations to be addressed to the Porte on this subject.

His Excellency said in reply that the Government had already made a representation at Constantinople in favour of Austrian vessels taking in cargo at Russian ports being allowed more than five days' grace; but that in consequence of my communication to him further instructions would be sent to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, proposing that vessels taking in cargo should be allowed fifteen days, and that with respect to vessels now on their way to Russian ports, a sufficient term should be fixed to meet the cases which may arise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 396.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 435.)
My Lord, *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

HAVING made inquiries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs whether any confirmation has been received here respecting the alleged expulsion of the insurgents in the north of Bosnia by the Turkish troops, reported in Consul Holmes' telegram communicated to me yesterday by your Lordship, I was told that about twenty insurgents were driven across the frontier near Bihats ten days ago, who were immediately disarmed by the Austrian authorities.

Since then, however, no incident of the kind appears to have occurred, but insurgents driven towards the frontier by the Turkish troops may possibly have been supposed to have crossed it, which the inefficient military operations of the Turkish commanders rarely oblige them to do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 397.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 437.)
My Lord, *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that it is arranged that Prince Reuss, recently appointed German Ambassador to the Porte, who is expected here to-day, and Count Zichy, the Austrian Ambassador, are to proceed to Constantinople by the steam-packet which leaves Trieste on Saturday next, the 12th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 398.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 439.)
My Lord, *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that permission has been obtained from the Russian Government to enable Baron Löhneysen, an Austrian cavalry officer, formerly

an Aide-de-camp of the Emperor, and another Austrian officer, to join the head-quarters of the army of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 399.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 443.)
My Lord, *Vienna, May 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the inclosed despatch, which has been addressed to me by Major Gonne, Military Attaché to this Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 399.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Vienna, May 8, 1877.*

THE undisguised sympathy of the Archduke Albert for the Russians, and the nomination of one of the Court party as an extra Military Attaché to the head-quarters of the army of the Danube, tends to confirm an opinion I have reluctantly formed, that, under existing circumstances, and during the present campaign, Austria will maintain a neutrality friendly to Russia.

In my humble opinion, the policy of this Empire will be reflex of that of Germany. The Russians have wisely made a show of deference to the wishes of Count Andrassy in abandoning their intention of crossing the Upper Danube above the confluence of Novi Timock.* By diplomatic arrangement, the Turks are now content to erect batteries opposite Kalafat, and the seat of war is removed from the vicinity of the Austrian and the Servian frontiers. The Russians also discourage warlike enterprise on the part of Servia. Also doubtless the navigation of the Danube will be re-opened when the Russians have gained a firm footing in Bulgaria. Thus, at the outset, Austria has nothing to complain of, granting that a breach of Treaty faith has been condoned.

In point of fact, Austria has already elected to content herself with the promises of her powerful neighbour. Calculating on material aid from Germany, if, in the end, what may be called German Danubian interests be compromised. The Emperor regrets his policy at the close of the Crimean war.

Dating from the first troubles in the revolting Christian provinces of Turkey, the neutrality of Austria has been decidedly friendly to the insurgent Slavs.

The neutral management of Baron Rodich (a Slav)† in Dalmatia was almost hostile to the Turks, and the closing of the port of Klek in the autumn of 1876, whilst the "Bocche di Cattaro" were by no means hermetically sealed, was not only a hostile but an unjust act, for which the Austrian Government was responsible. It is true that early in the year the Government sent stringent orders both to General Molinary at Agram, and to Baron Rodich, regarding neutral duties on the frontier. The former explained to me that between Bosnia and the military frontier there existed no real boundary, whilst the latter, on tendering his resignation, received the thanks of the Emperor for the manner in which he had executed his duty.‡ Be this as it may, the insurgents obtained the supplies necessary for the prosecution of their enterprise.

The Slav element is largely and powerfully represented in the army.

The General in command of Vienna, Upper and Lower Austria, and Salzbourg, is the successful General Marocci.§

The General commanding at Brünn, Moravia, and Silesia, is another Slav, Field-Marshal Phillipovic, and the Slav proclivity of the virtual Commander-in-chief, the son of the Archduke Charles, has been already mentioned. Under these circumstances, however clever Count Andrassy may be in cajoling his Hungarian countrymen, no anti-

* I know that preparation had been made for sending the means to bridge the Danube to the terminus of the Roumanian Railway.
† A Slav relation of the Governor's commanded the frontier troops with head-quarters at Ragusa.
‡ Public press.
§ Did good service at Custozza.

Slav policy can exist. And in my humble opinion, a moment of danger for the Empire is when Count Andrassy gives place to a Minister imprudent enough to throw off the mask and show the Magyar race their real position. The Hungarians are by nature reckless and capable of violent action before acknowledging the fact, that their race is no longer dominant, and that the numerical superiority and thrift of the coming Slavs command respect.

I mention all this to prove to your Excellency that England will indulge a delusive hope if she calculates on Austria as an ally, even to the limited extent of the years 1854-5.

The policy of Austria hangs entirely on that of Germany, in my opinion.

In 1866, the General commanding was never sure which side his Hungarian and Italian troops would espouse during battle.

In 1877, in battle-order against Russia, the Commander-in-chief would have unpleasant doubts as to the fidelity of his Slav regiments; and the officers, one and all, express a conviction that Italy would take advantage of the opportunity.

Lastly, the effect of the dinner speech of Prince Bismarck is passing, and the German provinces give fresh anxiety. Who will say, then, that nervous but steadfast neutrality friendly towards the strong is not a wise resolve on the part of a Minister in a land without patriotism and without money?

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. GONNE, *Major, 17th Lancers, Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 399.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

Vienna, May 9, 1877.

Sir,

IN the absence of a Military Attaché at the Russian head-quarters on the Danube, I consider it my duty to send home the few facts I can glean relating to the invasion of Turkey.

The wishes expressed by Austria will not prevent the Russians from effecting a passage of the Danube in the neighbourhood of Widdin. And I am of opinion not only will this locality be chosen as one of three or even more points of passage, but also that the main body of the Russian army is marching in this direction.

I am unable to ascertain that any other corps than the 8th Russian corps d'armée has shown itself on the banks of the Danube where Turkish attention seems to be directed, viz., the lower part of the river.

I understand that during the winter two battalions of the regiments in Bessarabia were under the Grand Duke, but that the two other battalions were between the Dnieper and Dniester; now, all four battalions are together in the battle order and a corps numbers over 40,000 men; that large stores of pressed forage have been accumulated on the Prath, and that preparations to form a bridge are being carried on in the Sereth river is well known, therefore, a passage of the lower Danube is meditated, but I question whether the "gros" of the army intends to pass into the Dobruza. The certainty of Austria remaining neutral renders a turning movement possible by the Balkan passes which concentrate on Tatar-Bazardjik. Had Servia been at war with Turkey, the Nich-Sophia road might have served, but as it is, the Sophia-Philippopel road can be reached and less artificial obstacles exist than through the Balkan passes covered by Shumla.

I hear that the Russians have made a contract for 20,000 country carts to be produced when and where ordered in Bulgaria at 12 fr. per cart per day. Their "train" will carry ammunition exclusively. I am also informed that whilst sieges are being pushed on, the Russians will construct a railway in Bulgaria. The deliberation with which preparations are made for the invasion of Turkey in Europe contrasts with the energetic action of the Russian army of the Caucasus, but it must be acknowledged that consummate skill is not too strong a term to describe the preliminary moves of the northern aggressor, and the prospects of the Turks already begin to look desperate. In Asia the Turks would have gained strength every day, whilst in Europe every day's delay is a disadvantage to the Turk, obliged to consume supplies which ought to be held in reserve within the fortresses.*

When the Russians have veiled their intentions sufficiently on the left bank of the

* The merchants of Hungary insist on being paid for grain at the mill.

Danube, their action will have to be rapid, or the troops will suffer from the deadly effects of a Bulgarian sun.*

In criticising the dispositions of Abdul Kerim one must bear in mind the political situation. Kalafat certainly ought to have been occupied and the railway bridge over the Sereth river destroyed, but either of these actions would have given the Roumanians an excuse for the line of conduct they have chosen without excuse. Those who think that the Turks might have taken further offensive action, do not know the state of the country during a wet spring. If the Turks have the means of crossing the Danube, they will take Kalafat within a few days. The battalions ordered from Widdin towards the Dobrutza have been recalled, and an offensive reconnaissance may be expected; but behind the Roumanians at Kracova, will, I anticipate, be found the Russians in strength.

I have the honour of submitting a rough plan of Widdin and Kalafat, and the strength of the Turks and Roumanians. As regards the latter, the Austrian Government suspects the presence of not a few of her subjects in the reserve list, and, in consequence, has ordered the Austrian "reservists" out to drill on the 15th May. I have no means of ascertaining the strength of the Russians at the present moment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. GONNE, *Major, 17th Lancers, Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 399.

STATEMENT of the Turkish Force in Bulgaria, April 28, 1877.

Widdin, 73 battalions—	
Infantry	52,000
Cavalry	200
Guns	100
Note.—30 battalions left Widdin for the Lower Danube; but I hear they are ordered back.	
Bassova—	
Infantry	100
Nicopoli, 8 battalions—	
Infantry	4,500
Cavalry	170
Guns	18
Sistov, 8 battalions—	
Infantry	6,000
Cavalry	170
Guns	18
Rustchuk, 18 battalions—	
Infantry	14,800
Cavalry	600
Guns	38
Turtukai, 3 battalions—	
Infantry	2,000
Silistria, 24 battalions—	
Infantry	17,800
Cavalry	170
Guns	6
Matchin, 2 battalions—	
Infantry	1,350
Cavalry	150
Guns	2
Tsaktchu, 1 battalion—	
Infantry	850
Cavalry	150
Guns	2
Tultchu, 3 battalions—	
Infantry	2,800
Cavalry	150
Guns	4
Kustendje, 1 battalion—	
Infantry	800
Varna, 18 battalions—	
Infantry	13,600
Cavalry	400
Guns	30
Pravady, 2 battalions—	
Infantry	1,400

* The roads are still in a bad state.

Schumla, 36 battalions—		
Infantry	24,180	
Cavalry	2,100	
Guns	70	
Razgrad, 4 battalions—		
Infantry	3,140	
Tirnova, 3 battalions—		
Infantry	2,300	
Plevna, 2 battalions—		
Infantry	1,600	
Kezan, 1 battalion—		
Infantry	600	

Total, 207 battalions, or, 149,000 infantry, 6,260 cavalry, and 288 field guns. Add about 6,000 "irregulars," and the garrison artillerymen, and perhaps 12,000 (?) Bulgarian militia.

STATEMENT of the Roumanian Army, May 1, 1877.

CRAJOVA.			
4 regiments of Infantry	3,600		
2 battalions Chasseurs	960		
½ battalion Engineers	240		
6 regiments Militia	7,680		
		12,680	
1 regiment Cavalry	400		
4 regiments Yeomanry	1,600		
		2,000	
		14,680	
2 regiments Artillery, of 5 batteries of 6 guns, equal to 60 guns.			
BUCHAREST.			
4 regiments Infantry	3,600		
2 battalions Chasseurs	960		
½ battalion Engineers	240		
10 regiments Militia	12,800		
		17,800	
1 regiment Cavalry	400		
4 regiments Yeomanry	1,600		
		2,000	
		19,800	
2 regiments of Artillery, of 6 batteries of 8 guns, equal to 90 guns.			
Total—			
Infantry	30,480		
Cavalry	4,000		
Guns (and a reserve of 60)	150		

Note.—With every reserve the Roumanian corps d'armée ought to be 40,000 strong. 400 officers are wanting, and at the present moment the small-arm ammunition is enough to supply 200 rounds per man. The Bucharest portion will march to Crajova, and deficiencies are to be supplied by Russia. 160 years have passed since the Roumanians last fought. The Russians will probably take the troops in part over the Danube; but they are said to be of bad quality.

No. 400.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 444.)
Vienna, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 441 of the 9th instant, I understand that the Servian Agent has within the last few days, in conformity with instructions from Belgrade, given formal assurances to the Austro-Hungarian Government that Servia will remain neutral during the present war, and that M. Ristich feels confident that the Government can control any agitation in favour of a different policy, which may be attempted by the Panslavist committees.

The Government here, I am told, are disposed to trust to these assurances, as they believe that the people in Servia are strongly opposed to a renewal of hostilities against Turkey; but I have not been able to ascertain what course will be followed, in the event of the war party becoming dominant in the Principality.

Having succeeded, however, in preventing the war being brought near the frontiers of Austria-Hungary, by their representations to the Governments of Russia and Turkey, it would seem improbable that the Government would look on with indifference, if they had

reason to fear that this object would be frustrated by the proceedings of revolutionary agitators in Servia, who have doubtless relations with discontented Slavs within the territories of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 401.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 446. Very Confidential.)
Vienna, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE reason to believe that Count Zichy, who sails from Trieste for Constantinople to-day, feels confident that a Russian victory in Bulgaria will be followed immediately by negotiations for peace, and that the war will be brought to a close before September next.

My informant could not, however, state on what grounds Count Zichy's opinion has been formed, whether it is merely his Excellency's personal appreciation of the situation or whether he is aware of some understanding on the subject having been come to between the Governments of Austria-Hungary and Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 402.

Mr. Strachey to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 22.)
Dresden, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

HERR VON NOSTITZ remarked to me to-day that although our answer to Russia was unusually accentuated, it was not too much so for the occasion, and the arguments were in exact correspondence with facts. His Excellency said that he thought the despatch was generally approved here, as the invasion of Turkey, if not quite unprovoked, was an aggression undertaken for specific Russian objects.

The "Presse" (Fortschritt), and "Dresdner Nachrichten," both extravagantly Russophobe papers, could at first find no praise strong enough for the reply. These journals have, however, since been influenced by the fictions of the German Turcophile organs as to our immediate designs on Crete, Cyprus, Constantinople, Egypt, and so forth, and now announce that England is as hypocritical and rapacious as Russia, and that Germany will have a word to say if we try to carry out our projected plunder of the spoils available by the "liquidation of Turkey." The "Presse" has published an article (sent, I suspect, from London by Karl Blind) on the affair of the Transvaal Republic, describing the conduct of the Colonial Government in the worst terms, and calling the annexation a thoroughly Cossack breach of international law.

The national Liberal journals never lose an opportunity of expressing dislike of Her Majesty's Government, but their criticisms on this occasion have been milder than usual, and some of the leading periodicals of the party, printed in Leipzig, have been using strong language against Russia.

I understand that Herr von Helldorff writes from Vienna that the Government of Austria-Hungary will not move a man unless the vital interests of the monarchy are seriously threatened.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G STRACHEY.

No. 403.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 191. Confidential.)
Rome, May 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 181 of the 7th instant, inclosing a copy of a note dated the 6th instant, which your Lordship

has addressed to the Russian Ambassador, explaining the policy by which Her Majesty's Government will be guided in the war between Russia and Turkey, and to inform your Lordship that in an interview which I had with Signor Melegari to-day I read that note confidentially to him.

His Excellency said that it was with the greatest satisfaction that he had listened to this explanation of the views of Her Majesty's Government. It was a clear, frank, and straightforward declaration which he could not but consider as calculated to prevent further complications, and, when publicly known, to produce a reassuring effect in Europe. He did not hesitate to say that he considered the open, uninterrupted communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal, any attack on Egypt or its occupation, even temporarily, for the purpose of war, the maintenance of Constantinople in the hands of its present possessors, and the continuance of the existing arrangements which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, as matters of European as well as of English interest, and his Excellency added that although he did not believe that these points would be endangered, he nevertheless was of opinion that Her Majesty's Government could not have rendered a better service to the cause of general peace than by making this clear statement of their policy, which, while on the one hand it would effectually dissipate any illusions which Turkey might possibly still entertain in regard to assistance from England, would, at the same time he hoped, tend to keep Russia within the bounds of her original programme as announced at Livadia.

M. Melegari said he should be glad to have a copy of this despatch, but I told him I had no authority to give him one, or indeed even to read it to him, and had done so on my own responsibility.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 404.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

Constantinople, May 14, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
ORDERS have been given by the Porte to the Minister of War to leave at Jerusalem a sufficient force to (protect ?) foreigners and Christians.

No. 405.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

Berlin, May 15, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
COUNT SCHOUVALOFF arrived in Berlin last night. He has communicated your Lordship's note of the 6th instant addressed to himself to Count Bismarck.

It has produced a very favourable impression on the German Government.

No. 406.

Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15.)

Copenhagen, May 15, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
RUSSIAN Legation here are giving large orders for gunpowder in province of Scania, Sweden, hitherto not executed on account of Swedish neutrality.

No. 407.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 15, 3 P.M.)

Bucharest, May 15, 1877, 12·39 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
ON the 13th instant Turkish batteries bombarded Kalafat severely. Roumania lost eighty-six killed and wounded. A small loss also at Oltenitza.

Russian army is occupying Little Wallachia in force.

No. 408.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1877, 5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
BRITISH shipowners and merchants represent that bad weather in Sea of Azoff has delayed loading of ships, and they fear that there will not be time to complete cargoes before date fixed for leaving ports.

Ask Turkish Government if they will grant a few days' further delay to British vessels in Taganrog and Sea of Azoff ports, which are being loaded with grain actually the property of British subjects, and have been delayed from completing their cargoes by bad weather.

No. 409.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1877, 5·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
HER Majesty's Government have learnt with satisfaction the result of your representations as to the proper protection of foreigners and Christians at Jerusalem.

No. 410.

The Earl of Derby to Her Majesty's Consular Agents at Odessa, Nicolaieff, Kertch, Taganrog, Kherson, and Berdiansk.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
AMBASSADOR at Constantinople has reported, in answer to an inquiry addressed to him by telegraph on Saturday, that the Porte does not pretend to interfere with ships lying in blockaded harbours, and that they are free to load provided they do not carry contraband of war, and leave blockaded harbours within terms fixed by Turkish Government.

No. 411.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 105.)
Foreign Office, May 15, 1877.

Sir,
I HAVE received your telegram of the 14th instant, reporting that the Porte has given orders that a sufficient force is to be retained at Jerusalem for the proper protection of the foreigners and Christians there, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have learnt with much satisfaction that your representations have been successful in inducing the Turkish Government to take this precaution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 412.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 176.)
Foreign Office, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,
I HAVE to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the language held by you on the Eastern question, as reported in your despatch No. 191, Confidential, of the 9th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 413.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 186.) *Foreign Office, May 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN reply to your despatch No. 214 A of the 1st instant, I have to state to you that I approve of your having informed Prince Gortchakow that the Porte has withdrawn its request that Her Majesty's Government should undertake the protection of Turkish subjects in Russia during the war.

I also approve the steps which you have taken to notify this decision to Her Majesty's Consuls-General and Consuls.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 414.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram of the 30th ultimo, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have had under their consideration, in communication with the Legal Advisers of the Crown, the question of the interference with the rights of the Danube Commission as guaranteed by Treaty, resulting from the proceedings of the Russian authorities, and the general question of the free navigation of the Danube as affected by these proceedings.

Her Majesty's Government are advised that no doubt can be raised on the question whether the Danube is a neutral river or the navigation of the Danube free.

But with regard to the question whether the Russians and Turks, being at war, and carrying on military operations on the bank of the Danube, may impede, for military purposes, by torpedoes and other obstructions, the use of the river, the Law Officers, while viewing the case as an exceptional one, and the stoppage of navigation as justifiable only by the necessities of the war, are of opinion that those necessities may and do justify the stoppage of navigation.

Considering, then, that the Russians may stop the navigation of the Danube, it does not appear that any exception can be made in favour of the Commissioners, or of Her Majesty's gun-boats placed at their disposal.

You will, if possible, obtain a pass from the Russian and Turkish Commanders, to enable you, if necessary, to proceed to Galatz, and in case a pass cannot be obtained you may avail yourself of the safe-conduct by land offered by the Russian Commander.

Her Majesty's gun-boat must not endeavour to proceed up the river.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 415.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 78. Political.) *Bucharest, May 9, 1877.*

My Lord,

THERE is no longer any doubt that the Moldo-Wallachian Government has already concluded, or is on the point of concluding, a Convention of military co-operation with Russia.

The latest version of the conditions is that two corps d'armée are to be formed, to be styled the 1st and 2nd corps d'armée of the Danube, each composed in equal portions of Roumanians and Russians.

Prince Charles is to have the command of the first and a Russian General of the second. Both these corps will, it is stated, for the moment remain in this country.

The Grand Duke will, therefore, have eight corps d'armée under his immediate command. Assuming each corps to represent 28,000 combatants, the total amounts, in rough numbers, to 224,000, without including the Roumanian militia.

I am also informed that the entire sum to be paid to this Government by Russia, in liquidation of the old debt for church property, referred to in my despatch No. 51 of

the 23rd ultimo, is 16,000,000 fr.; 4,000,000 fr. are said to have been received already at Bucharest, and the remainder is to be paid in kind, that is to say, 1,000 horses, heavy guns, ammunition, rifles, and *matériel* of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 416.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 79. Political.) *Bucharest, May 9, 1877.*

My Lord,

I IMAGINE that some days before this reaches your Lordship I may have to report by telegraph the declaration of Roumanian independence, and war against the Porte.

Meetings have been held by Senators and Deputies for several days past to discuss the measure, and nobody doubts that it will be brought before the Chambers immediately.

At a meeting the day before yesterday M. Rosetti made an important address, enumerating their daily grievances against the Porte, and bringing in, with much exaggeration, the various occasions during the last few days, when shots have been exchanged between the Turkish gunboats and Russian batteries, that the Turks have carried off barges and vessels on the Danube, &c., &c.

The above are, of course, but a series of shallow pretexts; the presence of upwards of 100,000 Russian bayonets in these Principalities is the ægis which would enable such a measure to be possible, and which, notwithstanding the anti-Russian, or, I should perhaps more correctly say, the anti-war feeling in the country, would certainly be a source of gratification to the vanity of a large number of the inhabitants of these Principalities.

The sober heads, who are aware that the position of this country under the Treaties, as a vassal of the Porte, was materially and politically a sound one, are few in number, while it is to be noted that had the late Ministers now under impeachment—the Catardgis and Horescos, been in power at the present moment, it is an absolute certainty that a similar policy would have been pursued.

It is a curious circumstance that in Roumania the governing clique, and consequently the Chamber, whether of one party or the other, should be at distinct variance with what is for the advantage of the country, and indeed the expressed opinion out of doors; for although at the present juncture the national vanity may be gratified to a certain extent, the country in general would have preferred an inadventurous policy, and that the question of independence should not have been mooted.

Now, from a Roumanian point of view, if they really desire their independence, there is little doubt that it must be snatched at the present crisis; they argue, and perhaps with some justice, that had they waited to put in their claim until Europe was busy trying to patch up a peace, after a success on the part of Russia, their chances would have been small; that Russia would have claims enough to press for the consideration of Europe, and would take no account of Roumania, while Europe would maintain that, as there was no humanitarian interest at stake, there was no reason for formally severing the relations between the Porte and these Principalities.

Prince Charles and his Government say to themselves, "It is true that our independence may not be recognized," but they argue that at the present state of the world Turkey would never be permitted to send Pashas and troops into this country to enforce her supremacy even if it were formally admitted by future Treaties.

That such Treaties would remain a dead letter, like the stipulations with regard to the north of Sleswig, which Germany has never executed and will never execute; that they have only to bide their time, and that, sheltered under the powerful wing of Russia, sooner or later their independence will obtain recognition.

It is difficult to arrive at any idea how far the Roumanian Government has been pushed or encouraged by Russia in the present measure; one thing, however, is quite clear, that with upwards of 100,000 men in the country any disinclination on the part of Russia would be equivalent to a veto.

It may also be that even at the last moment influence might be exercised from elsewhere—Berlin or Vienna—to hold the hand of Prince Charles in the policy upon which it is believed that the Cabinet is disposed to embark, but on such parts of the subject it is quite impossible at this place to obtain any certain information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 417.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 16.*)

(No. 80. Political.) *Bucharest, May 10, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, translations of the addresses of the Senate and Chamber to Prince Charles, in reply to the speech from the throne on the opening of the present Session, as well as the answer of His Highness.

The inclosed must be judged by the light of the various incidents which I have lately reported to your Lordship, as well as by the note of the Porte on the subject of the Russo-Roumanian Convention.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 417.

Newspaper Extracts.

LA PRÉSENTATION DES ADRESSES.

NOUS avons dit que, Vendredi dernier, la Chambre des Députés avait présenté à Son Altesse le Prince Régnant l'adresse en réponse au discours du Trône. Nous avons reproduit, dans notre dernier numéro, la réponse du Prince; on lira plus loin l'adresse de la Chambre.

Lundi dernier, le Sénat a présenté son adresse au Prince. En voici la traduction :—

" Altesse Sérénissime,

" Il est des moments si graves, si solennels, dans la vie des nations que l'esprit le plus sage ne peut entraver le cours des événements. La raison humaine la plus prévoyante s'arrête en face de l'inconnu.

" Alors peuple et Trône, Chambre et Gouvernement, le pays tout entier n'a plus qu'une seule pensée, un seul cri, une seule sollicitude: le salut de la patrie.

" Le Sénat, par la connaissance qu'il a prise des actes diplomatiques, s'est convaincu que le Gouvernement de votre Altesse, en face des graves événements résultant du conflit Oriental, a employé tous ses efforts, toute sa persévérance, pour obtenir de la Sublime Porte et des Puissances Garantes, l'affirmation de notre neutralité, mais tout a été en vain.

" Aujourd'hui l'entré de l'armée Russe dans notre pays est un fait accompli, et le canon a commencé à dire son mot.

" Cette guerre entre deux de nos puissants voisins, nous ne l'avons ni désirée ni provoquée, Altesse, mais c'est un devoir sacré et impérieux pour nous de faire tout ce qui est humainement possible pour que la Roumanie ne devienne pas le théâtre de la guerre.

" Préservons nos campagnes fécondes de ces scènes sanglantes, de ces massacres épouvantables qui ont ensanglanté les vallées des Balkans.

" Altesse! la Roumanie, quoique isolée dans des moments aussi dangereux, mais se rappelant les traditions des ancêtres et invoquant la protection du Dieu de nos pères, s'appuie sur le patriotisme de ses fils et au besoin sur leurs bras.

" La Roumanie sera à la hauteur de son devoir dans des moments aussi solennels, alors que son avenir et son existence politique même peuvent être soumis à des dures épreuves, et elle ne négligera aucun sacrifice pour sauver et mettre hors de toute atteinte le pays et ses institutions.

" Notre jeune armée, fière d'avoir à sa tête le descendant de tant de héros, Charles I, saura faire son devoir.

" Altesse, le Sénat, corps mûr et pondérateur, ne conseillera jamais une politique hasardeuse et périleuse, encore moins d'attaquer l'un de nos puissants voisins aujourd'hui en guerre; ce serait un procédé non-seulement condamnable, mais encore une légèreté impardonnable.

" Mais si nos foyers étaient menacés, si la propriété que nous tenons de nos pères était envahie et nos droits anéantis, notre indifférence serait un crime de lèse-nation.

" Altesse! dans les circonstances douloureuses où se trouve notre cher pays, le Sénat,

plein de confiance dans le tact et la sagesse dont jusqu'ici le Gouvernement de votre Altesse a donné tant de preuves, se hâtera de lui donner les moyens nécessaires pour le mettre en situation de défendre les droits et les intérêts de la Roumanie, en face de la guerre commencée.

" La Convention conclue entre le Gouvernement Impérial Russe et le Gouvernement de votre Altesse, a diminué sensiblement les inquiétudes légitimes qui oppressaient les cœurs Roumains dans les circonstances aussi douloureuses, d'autant plus que Sa Majesté l'Empereur Alexandre II, l'un des puissants garants de notre existence politique, nous donne l'assurance qu'il maintiendra et fera respecter nos droits politiques et défendra l'intégrité de l'Etat Roumain.

" Vive la Roumanie!
" Vive votre Altesse!
" Vive son Altesse la Princesse!"

Son Altesse a répondu :—

" Messieurs les Vice-Présidents,
" Messieurs les Sénateurs,

" Recevez l'expression de ma complète gratitude pour le concours énergique que vous me promettez dans les graves circonstances où nous nous trouvons.

" Il ne pouvait d'ailleurs en être autrement de la part du Sénat de Roumanie. Aujourd'hui nous n'avons et ne pouvons avoir qu'un seul but: le salut de la patrie!

" MM. les Sénateurs, depuis mon message du 14 Avril, la situation a pris un caractère bien plus grave. Sans que nous l'ayons ni désirée ni provoquée, la guerre a éclaté entre nos puissants voisins et le pays a déjà commencé à en ressentir les douloureux effets. Sans qu'un seul coup de fusil ait été tiré de notre côté, nos villes et nos villages, à demi déserts, ont commencé à être dévastés.

" Notre commerce international, même dans la partie supérieure du Danube, est entièrement anéanti; car, contrairement au droit des gens, les monitors Ottomans entrent dans nos ports même pour enlever les navires, sans égard pour le pavillon qu'ils portent. Des villes ouvertes, comme Braila et Reni sont bombardées.

" Oltenitza, où ne se trouvait pas un seul peloton de l'armée Russe, a subi le même sort; il a reçu une nouvelle menace de bombardement. Sur plusieurs points de notre territoire ont eu lieu des invasions de bandes de Tcherkesses et de Bachi-Bozouks. Hier encore, un corps de Bachi-Bozouks, ayant passé le Danube, a brûlé les bâtiments qui se trouvaient dans le Giu, au port de Bechet, et dévasté les habitations.

" Comme vous le voyez, MM. les Sénateurs, nous qui ne voulions ni provoquer ni attaquer, nous nous voyons attaqués et provoqués sur notre propre territoire.

" En présence de cette attitude agressive, mon Gouvernement n'abandonnera pas cependant la voie prudente mais énergique qui lui a été recommandée par les Corps Législatifs. Et pourtant je prévois avec douleur que l'on ne nous tiendra pas compte de notre modération.

" En pareil cas, nous serons contraints de repousser la force par la force, car avant tout notre devoir est de défendre nos frontières.

" Et alors, j'en ai la conviction, notre jeune armée, prenant exemple sur ses ancêtres, saura prouver par sa bravoure qu'elle est une digne descendante de ces armées Roumaines qui, durant des siècles, défendirent la civilisation Chrétienne aux portes de l'Orient.

" Encore une fois, je suis heureux et reconnaissant de voir que le Sénat est décidé à ne reculer devant aucun sacrifice; du moment où les intérêts, les droits et la dignité de la Roumanie sont en jeu.

" Vive le Sénat!
" Vive la nation Roumaine!"

Adresse de la Chambre des Députés en réponse au Discours du Trône.

Altesse Sérénissime,

AUX jours des grandes épreuves, nos anciens Princes appelaient sans retard les grands conseils du pays. Votre Altesse a fait comme eux: elle a convoqué l'Assemblée Nationale. Et les Représentants de la nation se sont empressés, eux aussi, de se réunir avec amour autour du Trône, emblème impérissable et grandiose de notre souveraineté nationale. Ils ont appris avec douleur que la guerre, redoutée entre nos deux puissants voisins, ne pouvait plus être empêchée.

Après avoir pris connaissance de la correspondance diplomatique tenue par le Gouvernement de votre Altesse, l'Assemblée s'est convaincue que le Gouvernement avait fait tout ce qui était possible pour obtenir la garantie de cette neutralité, tant désirée par le pays et pour laquelle le pays avait fait, depuis un an, de si grands sacrifices moraux et matériels.

Dans l'état actuel des choses, voyant avec regret les difficultés opposées, maintenant comme toujours, par la Sublime Porte, aux justes demandes du pays; voyant que la Sublime Porte avait même refusé d'introduire notre demande de neutralité auprès de la Conférence de Constantinople, l'Assemblée approuve toutes les mesures prises par le Gouvernement de votre Altesse pour faire face à toutes les éventualités.

Nous comprenons et nous partageons le sentiment qui a fait jeter à votre Altesse un cri de douleur; le sentiment qui lui a fait dire que nous devons attendre tout notre secours de la bonté du Dieu de nos pères, et de la bravoure des fils de la patrie, conduite par la sagesse de ceux qui sont à sa tête. La sagesse et la bravoure des Roumains épargneront au pays la douleur de voir ici le théâtre d'une guerre qu'ils n'ont pas voulue, qu'ils n'ont pas provoquée. Que votre Altesse soit bien convaincue que si la volonté des Princes est unie à la volonté du peuple, elle l'est aussi à la volonté de Dieu, et que le succès ne peut manquer à ceux qui, n'ayant provoqué personne, n'ayant lésé les droits d'aucun, veulent empêcher seulement que leurs villes et leurs hameaux ne soient réduits en cendres; que le peuple ne soit massacré, et que ne soit anéanti le fruit de vingt années d'un travail pacifique.

Altesse Sérénissime,

L'entrée dans les pays des armées impériales Russes est maintenant un fait qui appartient à l'histoire. Dans la conclusion de la Convention entre le Gouvernement de votre Altesse et le puissant Empire de Russie, le pays voit un élément de calme au milieu des souffrances de la guerre et une assurance que son individualité politique, aussi bien que l'intégrité de ses frontières, seront respectées. En donnant sans hésitation et à la presque unanimité son approbation aux derniers actes du Gouvernement de votre Altesse, l'Assemblée est convaincue que ce Gouvernement continuera à agir d'une manière sage et patriotique, afin de préserver le pays de tout conflit avec aucun de ses voisins; tout en défendant le pays, et en le défendant alors à tout prix, si la terre Roumaine, ses droits et ses institutions étaient menacés de l'une de ces invasions qui, non-seulement voudraient localiser la guerre ici, mais encore apporteraient au pays les horreurs dont sont capables des armées indisciplinées.

Afin que le Gouvernement de votre Altesse puisse accomplir les difficiles devoirs qui lui incombent aujourd'hui, l'Assemblée—que votre Altesse en ait l'assurance—sera toujours prête à lui donner tout le concours et tous les moyens nécessaires.

Quand votre Altesse a uni son sort à celui du peuple Roumain, qui la mise à sa tête, quand le bonheur et la grandeur de ce peuple sont la grandeur et le bonheur de votre Altesse, il n'hésitera jamais à répondre à l'appel de son Prince.

Nos pères disaient que la voix des Princes unie aux conseils de la nation affermissent les trônes; ils disaient aussi—comme nous l'apprennent ces traditions que votre Altesse nous a rappelées avec un sentiment si profondément Roumain—ils disaient: Heureux le peuple dont le Prince, comme une sentinelle vigilante, garde la vieille patrie des ancêtres pour empêcher qu'elle ne subisse la moindre mutilation.

Sentinelle vigilante des frontières de la patrie Roumaine, vive votre Altesse Sérénissime! Vive Son Altesse la Princesse Régnante!

No. 418.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 187.)
My Lord, *Rome, May* 12, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Count Corti left Rome last evening to resume his post as Italian Minister at Constantinople. He proceeds by way of Brindisi and Corfu, at which latter place he will meet the Austrian Lloyd's steamer for Constantinople, on board of which he expects to find Count Zichy and Prince Reuss, so that the Representatives of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy will arrive at the Turkish capital simultaneously.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 419.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 188.)
My Lord, *Rome, May* 11, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 180 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received a note from the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing his thanks for the communication of the copy of your Lordship's despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, in reply to Prince Gortchakow's Circular of the 7/19th ultimo, stating that the Emperor of Russia had ordered his armies to cross the Turkish frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 420.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 28, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that, in consequence of the rupture between Russia and Turkey, the Consul of the former Power in this city left yesterday for Jaffa, to embark for Europe, with all the Russian pilgrims who were staying here. The members of the Russian ecclesiastical mission and some of the Russian resident subjects are to follow shortly. The superintendent of the Russian national establishments, who is at the same time Cancellier of the Consulate, is, however, to remain in what is described as a private capacity, an arrangement which seems unusual.

On the 25th instant the Russian Consulate and national establishments at Jerusalem, together with Russian subjects and interests, were transferred to the German Consul, under whose protection they are now placed. The transfer was effected at the Russian Consulate, whither Baron Münchhausen had repaired. The Russian flag was hoisted and lowered three times, after which the German flag was hoisted, and now daily floats over the Russian Consulate, which has the effect of provoking angry comment from the Moslem population; otherwise these have remained quiet.

The Turkish authorities, however, are taking precautions to preserve order, more especially in respect of Russian subjects and property.

I had occasion to see the Governor a day after the transfer above reported, and he informed me that he had not yet received any instructions on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 421.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 7. Political.)
My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 28, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, reporting disorders committed by Bedouin bands in the plain of Jaffa, and other information.

A copy of my despatch to Admiral Hornby, referred to in the inclosure, I have already forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 5, Political, of the 26th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 421.

Consul Moore to Mr. Jocelyn

Jerusalem, April 28, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Vice-Admiral Hornby.

With reference to my telegram of the 26th instant, trustworthy reports have reached me that bands of Bedouins from the Gaza district, supposed to be Tarabin or their partizans, have advanced as far as the town of Rourleh, which is within twelve miles of Jaffa, and, in other directions, within even a shorter distance of that town, and plundered the flocks and cattle of the villages and carried off the crops, in some instances maltreating the inhabitants, who are all Moslems. As I remark in my letter to the Admiral, the Bedouins are doubtless emboldened by the weakness of the military force left at the disposal of the authorities.

Two days ago some companies of Redifs were despatched against the marauders; but little reliance can be placed on these troops, who are natives of Palestine, on account of their tendency to desert.

Faik Bey, the Governor of Jerusalem, has at last been recalled and is to be replaced by Raouf Pasha, Governor of Trebizond, the date of whose arrival is uncertain. The Porte would have done well not to promulgate this measure until the near approach of the new Governor, as the dismissed functionary naturally loses power and consideration, and this is taken advantage of by the evil-disposed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 422.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 16.)

Jerusalem, May 4, 1877.

(No. 8. Political.)

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the evening of the 2nd instant a band of the Moslems of Lydda, a town distant three hours from Jaffa inland, paraded the streets uttering insults against the Christians. They repaired to the Greek church and broke some of the windows, and, it is said, threw in filth. They then went to the Christian quarter and assailed the doors of the houses, all the time using threatening and insulting language. They tried hard to force the door of one of the principal Greek Christian inhabitants, but it resisted. The Imam (Moslem priest) and the chief police officer came and rebuked the rioters, but the latter are reported to have assaulted both.

The Christians of Lydda are naturally in great terror. Immediately on the news of what had occurred reaching the Governor of Jaffa he started for Lydda, with a body of police, and others have been despatched from Jerusalem.

There have been, so far as is known to me, no fresh disorders by the Bedouins. On the occurrence of those already reported, I informed Mr. Consul-General Eldridge that the presence at Jaffa of Her Majesty's ship "Coquette," stationed at Beyrout, was desirable. That vessel accordingly came there, but being short of coal, Captain Shirley, after communicating with me, left for Port Said to replenish with coal, and returned yesterday to Jaffa. I expect Captain Shirley and a party of officers and seamen this evening on a visit to Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 423.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 16.)

Buda-Pest, May 9, 1877.

(No. 27.)

Sir,

WITH reference to the abstention of the Croatian Deputies from the vote of thanks to the Sultan, as reported in my despatch No. 20 of the 1st instant, I find that the Agram newspaper "Obzor" states that M. Miskatovics had abandoned till a more fitting

moment his intention of making an anti-Turkish interpellation, as M. Tisza declined on the 4th to go into any details, as the philo-Turkish policy was displeasing in official circles and as the Croatian Deputies had announced their protest against such a policy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 424.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 16.)

Buda-Pest, May 11, 1877.

(No. 28.)

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 19 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that when His Imperial Highness the Archduke Albrecht, in the course of his inspection of the troops on the Hungarian frontier, arrived on the 9th at Agram, an ovation on the part of the townspeople and students awaited him.

The Banus Mazsuranics is said to have endeavoured with the more moderate Croats to prevent any political significance being given to the rejoicings, but the efforts of the less moderate to make a counter demonstration against the Hungarians prevailed so far as even to welcome the Archduke with the Russian Hymn after their own national air. Moreover, the students prepared an address in favour of an annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina to the Croatian Crown, to which they formerly belonged.

It is stated that the playing of the Russian Hymn displeased the Archduke, and that His Imperial Highness declined to receive the address.

But it is, nevertheless, believed here that these demonstrations were desired, and that the formality of inspecting the troops was destined to end in a Croatian expression of anti-Turkish feeling. And the Hungarians are not a little concerned that so near a relative of the Emperor, and one supposed to be both reactionary and pro-Slav in politics, should choose this moment for awaking by his presence Croatian aspirations after a larger territory.

Most Croats combine with their loyalty to the Empire a desire for greater influence by increase of territory, but comparatively few desire a South Slav Confederation or Kingdom, and it is not thought that on this occasion so many as a third of the people, Serbs and others, sympathised with the demonstrants.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 425.

Mr. Erskine to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 10.)

Stockholm, May 12, 1877.

(No. 43.)

My Lord,

I HAD the honour yesterday evening to forward to your Lordship a telegram *en clair* in the following words:—

"The King has this day applied to the Diet for a credit of 111,000*l.*, to enable him, if necessary, to uphold the neutrality of Sweden."

This "Royal proposal" was countersigned by General Björnstjerna, and laid before the Diet by M. Leven, a Councillor of State, in these terms:—

"As a war has broken out in Europe affecting the interests of several Powers, and threatening to give rise to difficulties of a yet more serious nature, and it may become necessary to adopt measures for maintaining the neutral position of the United Kingdoms, which it is His Majesty's determined intention to maintain, and with a view to the preservation of which, in so far as Sweden is concerned, His Majesty considers funds should be available without specially summoning the Diet, it is His Majesty's desire that the sum which, in virtue of section 63 of the Fundamental Law, is made available, irrespective of a war of invasion, for the defence of the realm, shall with other means be employed to counteract the present uncertainty of the general political situation, and the Diet is consequently requested to assign an additional credit of 2,000,000 kronor (111,000*l.*) for the use of His Majesty, the opinion of the whole Council of State having

first been ascertained, for the purpose of being applied to the adoption of such measures as may appear requisite to preserve the neutrality of the realm."

After a few observations in the Lower Chamber this proposal was referred by both Chambers to the Finance Committee.

A Royal Ordinance likewise appeared in yesterday's official paper enjoining the strictest neutrality on all Swedish subjects in the existing war, of which the following is a translation :—

"We, Oscar, by the grace of God King of Sweden, Norway, and the Wends, hereby notify, that as war has broken out between certain foreign Powers, we have thought fit to remind those whom it may concern to conform strictly to our gracious Ordinance of April 8, 1854, in regard to the measures prescribed for the protection of Swedish trade and navigation in time of war between foreign naval Powers. They will, moreover, take for their guidance the Decree of September 13, 1855, respecting the article lead, which is to be deemed as comprised in the articles contraband of war.

"The above-mentioned is strictly to be observed by those whom it may concern, &c.

"*Palace of Stockholm, May* 11, 1877.

(Signed) "OSCAR.

(Signed) "C. J. THYSELIUS."

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

No 426.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 442. Very Confidential.)

Vienna, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 333 of the 14th ultimo, reporting Baron Orczy's denial that any importation of arms and ammunition into Montenegro had taken place through Cattaro, I had no doubt, when I communicated that statement to your Lordship, that it was incorrect, as I had reason to believe from an observation of Mr. Monson in a private letter that he had reliable information which he could not at the time impart to me of the complicity of the Dalmatian Custom-house officers, and even of the Austro-Hungarian Government in the transaction alluded to.

Having now ascertained from Mr. Monson the nature of the information which he possessed on the subject, and thinking it right that it should be communicated to your Lordship, I forward herewith a report which he has addressed to me upon it, and which your Lordship will, I feel assured, cause to be considered as strictly confidential.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 426.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Confidential.)

Vienna, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

IN compliance with your Excellency's request that I would furnish you with a report of the facts, as far as they are known to me, concerning the recent importation of munitions of war vid Cattaro into Montenegro, referred to in my despatch to the Earl of Derby, No. 88 of the 6th April, I have the honour to state that my Austro-Hungarian colleague knowing, as he told me, that I should certainly become acquainted in other ways with most of the truth, came to me some days before the landing of the cargo, and gave me a general account of the manner of the intended transaction.

Colonel Thömmel said that Prince Nicholas was very anxious and very apprehensive at the recent change in the Civil Government at Cattaro, the "Capitano del Distretto," who had been there for some years, and was devoted to Montenegro, having been transferred to Ragusa, and replaced by a man in whom the Prince had no confidence. This was peculiarly unfortunate at the moment, because a steamer was already dispatched from Trieste with an immense supply of cartridges for the rifles taken from the Turks during the campaign of last year, and the Prince had got an idea into his head that the new Administrator of the Government at Cattaro would be glad to signalize his entrance into office by a display of energy in the enforcement of neutrality. Colonel Thömmel explained to me that he was doing his best to reassure His Highness; that he was in constant communication with the Administrator at Cattaro, receiving two or three cyphered telegrams from him every day; and that, if the Prince only managed his part of the business well, there would be really no danger.

The Colonel proved to be in the right, for in spite of accidents to the steamer caused by the bad weather, and in spite also of the presence at Cattaro of the Turkish Consul-General from Ragusa, all the cargo was safely landed and carried over the frontier into the Principality. I was informed that the Administrator himself assisted in mystifying Danish Effendi by conducting him to a warehouse where the Russian grain was stored, and allowing him to waste his time there while the ammunition was being removed from another warehouse where it had been temporarily deposited..

My Austro-Hungarian colleague admitted to me that he had more than once discussed with Count Andrassy the nature and amount of assistance to be given to Montenegro in the way of permitting the passage of contraband of war, and that Count Andrassy had said, and had charged him to tell the Prince, that while the Austro-Hungarian Government was quite willing to shut its eyes to all transactions of the kind, and even to grant facilities for their perpetration, their good-will in the matter was somewhat hindered by the propensity of the Montenegrins to boast of their success in "running" contraband cargoes, and his Excellency desired the Colonel to impress upon His Highness that it was really essential that the importation of contraband of war should be kept as quiet as possible.

From all that I have seen and heard during the past fifteen months I am sure that there is hardly an official in Dalmatia, from Baron Rodich downwards, who is not ready to connive at, and even take part in, violations of neutrality, and I am convinced that this is perfectly well known and understood at Vienna. Indeed Count Szapáry, the Governor of Fiume, fully and explicitly confessed as much to me the other day, and declared that Fiume was the only port on the Adriatic littoral where such practices were not tolerated.

Colonel Thömmel's communications to me were made in the strictest confidence; and he begged me to make no official use of them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 427.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 447.)

Vienna, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 429 of the 6th instant, I have now the honour to inclose a copy published in the "Gazette" of this morning, together with a French translation from the "Correspondance Autrichienne" of a Ministerial Ordinance, prescribing the rules by which the Austrian authorities and Austrian subjects shall be guided in consequence of the neutrality of the Empire in the war at present existing between Russia and Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 427.

Declaration of Neutrality of Austria-Hungary.

(Traduction.)

LA "Gazette Officielle" publie une Ordonnance émanée des Ministères de l'Intérieur, de la Justice, et du Commerce, et portant la date du 11 Mai. Ce document expose la ligne de conduite à suivre par les autorités et les ressortissants de la Monarchie, pendant la durée du conflit Russo-Turc, en ce qui concerne le commerce et la navigation.

Voici la teneur de cette Ordonnance, qui a été concertée entre le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et le Gouvernement Hongrois :—

Article 1. Il est interdit aux navires portant pavillon Austro-Hongrois de se prêter au transport des troupes des Etats belligérants, ou de fournir aux dits Etats rien de ce qui est considéré comme contrebande de guerre tant par le droit public que par les dispositions spéciales prises à cet égard par les Etats intéressés.

Tout navire Austro-Hongrois en communication avec ces Etats est tenu de ne garder à son bord que la quantité de matériel prohibé reconnue nécessaire pour son propre usage ou pour sa défense.

Il est interdit aux navires Austro-Hongrois de se rendre dans les ports ou sur les points investis ou bloqués par les Puissances belligérantes.

Dans le cas où il serait contrevenu aux dispositions présentes, le Gouvernement refuserait son appui à ceux des contrevenants dont les biens auront été capturés ou mis en embargo par les belligérants.

Art. 2. En dehors du cas sus-énoncé, les navires marchands d'Autriche-Hongrie sont libres de continuer, nonobstant l'état de guerre, leur trafic et leurs rapports ordinaires avec les places maritimes des Etats belligérants. Réciproquement, les navires marchands des Etats désignés plus haut sont libres de mouiller comme par le passé dans les ports de la monarchie, d'y séjourner et de s'y radouber, en un mot de continuer leurs rapports en se conformant aux lois existantes et particulièrement aux dispositions concernant l'observation de la neutralité.

A l'égard de l'entrée des vaisseaux de guerre étrangers dans les ports Austro-Hongrois, les dispositions prises antérieurement à leur sujet resteront en vigueur.

Art. 3. Dans l'attente légitime que le commerce neutre sera dûment respecté par les Puissances belligérantes, et que l'application des mesures usitées en pareil cas sera faite conformément aux principes du droit public et aux dispositions particulières contenues dans les Conventions existantes, il est enjoint, par la présente, aux navires marchands de nationalité Austro-Hongroise, se trouvant en pleine mer, de se soumettre à toute visite réclamée par les croisières des belligérants de produire sans hésiter les papiers et documents prouvant leur neutralité, de ne point noyer ou détruire ces pièces et encore moins garder à bord des papiers faux ou secrets.

Art. 4. S'il arrivait qu'en dépit de l'observation des prescriptions sus-énoncées, un navire Autrichien ou Hongrois était l'objet de procédés illégaux, plainte devrait en être portée sans retard au Consul ou fondé de pouvoir Austro-Hongrois le plus proche, afin que le Gouvernement pût faire auprès des Etats étrangers les démarches requises par la circonstance, à l'effet d'obtenir dédommagement et satisfaction, ou pour appuyer les démarches qui auraient déjà été faites par nos nationaux victimes de ces procédés.

Art. V. Ces dispositions entreront en vigueur à partir du jour de leur promulgation.

Vienne, ce 11 *Mai*, 1877.

(Signé) AUERSPERG, m.p.
LASSER, m.p.
GLASER, m.p.
CHLUMECKY, m.p.

Le "Journal Official Hongrois" publie une déclaration identique.

No. 428.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 15, 1877.

SULTAN having been induced by persons in the Palace to hesitate about granting an amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians, I obtained a private audience of His Majesty to-day, and have received his word that the amnesty shall be granted with certain exceptions, which are to be made on an understanding with me.

I write fully by messenger, who leaves to-morrow.

No. 429.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 15, 1877.

THE Porte states that Soukoum Kalé has been bombarded and taken, and that Mussulmans of district have risen against the Russian authorities.

No. 430.

*Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received May* 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Washington, May* 15, 1877.

RUSSIAN squadron sails to-morrow from New York under sealed orders, supposed for Cronstadt.

No. 431.

Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May* 16, 1877.

REPORTED that Hashmutoo Dawylah Shahzidah at Mahomerah has received telegram to the following effect:—

"Persian Ambassador at Constantinople reports Nosair Pasha Busreh has received order to evacuate Shalha Island. Your Highness will insist on its evacuation; and if Nosair Pasha refuses, he will be responsible. The English Minister at Tehran has instructed his Agent at Basreh to support you. Final object of assemblage of Persian troops at Mahomerah now apparent. Solicit instructions. Nosair Pasha received no orders."

No. 432.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.†

(No. 107.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1877.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, respecting a project, of which a copy is also inclosed, communicated to me by M. de Lesseps, for the neutralization of the Suez Canal.

Your Excellency will see that Her Majesty's Government have declined to adopt that project, but have informed M. de Lesseps of the intimation made by Her Majesty's Government to the Russian Ambassador on the 6th instant that an attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches would be regarded by Her Majesty's Government as a menace to India and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world, and that, on both these grounds, any such step—which Her Majesty's Government hope and fully believe there is no intention on the part of either belligerent to take—would be incompatible with the maintenance by Her Majesty's Government of an attitude of passive neutrality.

I have to request your Excellency to acquaint the Porte with the intimation thus conveyed to the Russian Government, and to state that Her Majesty's Government will expect that the Porte and the Khedive will on their side abstain from impeding the navigation of the Canal, or adopting any measures likely to injure the Canal or its approaches, and that Her Majesty's Government are firmly determined not to permit the Canal to be made the scene of any combat or other warlike operations.

I have addressed a similar despatch to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 433.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 290.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1877.

M. DE LESSEPS called upon me at the Foreign Office on the 10th instant, having as he stated, come expressly from Paris to lay before Her Majesty's Government in a confidential manner, a project for regulating the passage of ships of war through the Suez Canal.

* Repeated to St. Petersburgh and Constantinople.
† A similar despatch was addressed to Mr. Vivian.

I received him in company with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he handed to me the draft Project, of which I inclose a copy.

He said that he had discussed the terms of it with the Duc Décazes, and was authorized to say that the French Government acquiesced in them.

After some conversation, I told him that the question of the position of the Suez Canal under present circumstances was a difficult and delicate one, and that I could not then say more than that the project which he had been good enough to submit to me should have full consideration.

Her Majesty's Government have since carefully considered the Project, and have come to the conclusion that the scheme proposed in it for the neutralization of the Canal by an International Convention is open to so many objections of a political and practical character, that they could not undertake to recommend it for the acceptance of the Porte and the Powers.

Her Majesty's Government are, at the same time, deeply sensible of the importance to Great Britain and other neutral Powers of preventing the Canal being injured or blocked up by either of the belligerents in the present war, and your Excellency is at liberty to inform M. de Lesseps that Her Majesty's Government intimated to the Russian Ambassador, in a note which I addressed to his Excellency on the 6th instant, that an attempt to blockade, or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches, would be regarded by Her Majesty's Government as a menace to India, and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world. I added that, on both those grounds any such step, which Her Majesty's Government hope and fully believe there is no intention on the part of either belligerent to take, would be incompatible with the maintenance by Her Majesty's Government of an attitude of passive neutrality.*

Her Majesty's Government will cause the Porte and the Khedive to be made acquainted with the intimation thus conveyed to the Russian Government, and Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople and Agent in Egypt will be instructed to state that Her Majesty's Government will expect that the Porte and the Khedive will on their side abstain from impeding the navigation of the Canal, or adopting any measures likely to injure the Canal or its approaches, and that Her Majesty's Government are firmly determined not to permit the Canal to be made the scene of any combat or other warlike operations.

In stating this to M. de Lesseps, your Excellency will explain that Her Majesty's Government have thus taken the initiative in regard to the protection of the Canal on account of the pressing necessity, as regards British interests, of maintaining the security of the Canal, and they do not doubt that if the Canal were to be seriously menaced, the French and other Governments would adopt a similar course.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 433.

Memorandum by M. de Lesseps.

LA déclaration très nette, faite par le Gouvernement Anglais, aux deux Chambres du Parlement, sur sa résolution de maintenir la liberté du passage du Canal de Suez pour ses bâtiments de guerre, m'a fait penser qu'il y aurait peut-être lieu de négocier avec d'autres Gouvernements un accord à ce sujet.

Comme Président de la Compagnie financière à laquelle l'Angleterre est associée, je soumets au Comte Derby un projet exprimant simplement mes idées personnelles, auquel j'ai des raisons de croire que le Duc Decazes serait disposé à adhérer d'après une conversation particulière que j'ai eue hier matin avec lui.

Dans le cas où le Ministère Britannique ne jugerait pas à propos d'entamer lui-même des pourparlers avec les autres Cabinets, je pourrais faire, à Paris, aux Représentants des diverses Puissances intéressées, des ouvertures dont je rendrais compte à Lord Derby et au Duc Decazes.

(Signé) FERD. DE LESSEPS.

Londres, le 10 Mai, 1877.

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* This is a quotation of the note to Count Schouvaloff of May 6, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 433.

International Agreement as to passage of Ships of War through the Suez Canal.

DEPUIS l'ouverture du Canal de Suez en 1869, la liberté complète du passage par le Canal Maritime et les ports en dépendant a été respectée pour les bâtiments d'Etat aussi bien que pour les bâtiments de commerce, même de la part des Puissances belligérantes, lors de la guerre Franco-Allemande.

Les Gouvernements de . . . . . sont d'accord aujourd'hui pour maintenir la même liberté à tout navire d'Etat ou de commerce quel que soit son pavillon et sans aucune exception.

Etant entendu que les navires d'Etats seront soumis aux mesures que pourra prendre l'autorité territoriale pour empêcher les navires en transit de débarquer sur le territoire Egyptien aucune troupe ou munition de guerre.

No. 434.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 291.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have not received any report from your Excellency of the Duc Decazes having spoken to you with regard to the project of M. de Lesseps for the neutralization of the Suez Canal.

They nevertheless desire that your Excellency should take an opportunity of informing the Duc Decazes of what has passed in the matter, and of explaining to his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government have been compelled by circumstances to take the initiative in making an intimation to the Russian Government, and consequently to the Turkish Government, on the subject. They do not doubt that their having done so will meet with the concurrence of other neutral Powers, and especially of the French Government, who have common interests in the Canal with Her Majesty's Government, and with whom Her Majesty's Government are specially desirous of acting cordially in all affairs relating to the Canal and to Egypt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 435.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 292. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1877.

IN order that the French Government may the better understand the circumstances under which Her Majesty's Government felt called upon to make the intimation to the Russian Government with regard to the Suez Canal referred to in my despatches Nos. 290 and 291 of the 16th instant, I have to request your Excellency to communicate confidentially to the Duc Decazes my note to Count Schouvaloff of the 6th instant, of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch No. 272 of the 7th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 436.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 293.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1877.

I TRANSMIT herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of an instruction which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople and Agent in Egypt, respecting a project communicated to me by M. de Lesseps for the neutralization of the Suez Canal.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 432.

No. 437.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 198.)
Foreign Office, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 191, Confidential, of the 11th instant, in which you report having communicated confidentially to Signor Melegari the note which I addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the 6th instant, of which a copy was transmitted to your Excellency in my despatch No. 181 of the 7th of this month.

It appears from the concluding paragraph of your Excellency's despatch, that M. Melegari had asked to have a copy of my note to the Russian Ambassador; but as in transmitting this document to you it was intended only for your Excellency's information and not for communication to Signor Melegari, I cannot authorize your giving his Excellency a copy of it, at any rate for the present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 438.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 402.)
Constantinople, May 2, 1877.

My Lord,

A REPORT that the Porte was about to declare Constantinople in a state of siege having caused great alarm, especially among the Christians and the foreign residents in the city and suburbs, I spoke to Safvet Pasha on the subject, and urged him very strongly not to have recourse to this measure except under the most extreme necessity. I pointed out to his Excellency that it might give rise to every kind of difficulty and to serious misunderstandings with foreign Powers on account of the capitulation. Moreover, to empower the authorities and the police to enter houses to search for arms, and for other purposes, might lead to acts of violence calculated to excite European public opinion anew against the Turkish Government. His Excellency subsequently sent to tell me that the Porte, after full consideration, had decided upon not taking this step unless the Russians were actually threatening Constantinople, or other circumstances of a grave nature rendered it absolutely necessary.

The French and some other Chargé d'Affaires, and the British residents to whom I communicated this decision, were a good deal relieved from their anxiety by it.

I had the honour to inform your Lordship by telegraph on the 2nd instant of the course that I had taken in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 439.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 404.)
Constantinople, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the reports that I have made to your Lordship as to the language of the German Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople in insisting that Germany should have the protection of Russian subjects and interests in Turkey during the war, I have the honour to state that the assurances given to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin by the German Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that his Government do not deny the right of the Porte to expel Russians from Turkey, but that the refusal to admit the protection of Russians by a friendly Power was unusual and calculated to estrange Germany, who is otherwise anxious to keep on the most friendly terms with Turkey, are entirely at variance with the course pursued by Count Radolinski. His language to the Porte has throughout been strong, if not violent, and menacing, and the alarm which it caused to the Turkish Ministers led them to yield to the pretensions of Germany in a manner which they themselves admit to be very humiliating to Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 440.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 406.)
Constantinople, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED a visit this morning from Vassilaky Bey Sarakiote, one of the Greek Deputies to the Turkish Parliament for Constantinople. I was somewhat surprised when he informed me that he was still in the Chamber, and took an active part in its proceedings. The correspondents of the "Times," and other newspapers hostile to the Turkish Government, had stated, some time ago, that Vassilaky Bey and his colleague had resigned their places in the Chamber on account of the manner in which they had been treated by the Porte.

He positively denied that there was any truth in the statement, and asserted that he was perfectly satisfied with the position which he held, and with the entire freedom he enjoyed in expressing his opinions.

As an instance, he described to me a debate in the "House" in which he had strongly attacked the Government for using the terms "Mussulmans" and "non-Mussulmans" instead of Ottomans.

This statement of Vassilaky Bey will furnish a further proof of the manner in which false rumours injurious to the Porte, and conducive to the objects of Russia, have been designedly and actively invented and propagated from this centre of unscrupulous intrigue.

Vassilaky Bey expressed his opinion that unless the Turkish arms met with some signal reverses, there was no reason to fear any attempt at insurrection on the part of the Greek populations of the southern provinces of Turkey in Europe. He admitted that the Russian agents, principally employed by the monks of Mount Athos, were endeavouring to excite those populations to rebellion; but he was not inclined to believe in the success of their efforts.

If, however, he said, some great defeat experienced by the Turks led to a panic, and general demoralization, he had little doubt but that the Greeks in Turkey would avail themselves of the opportunity to rise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 441.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 407.)
Constantinople, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED to-day a deputation from the Catholic Armenian community which still maintains its independence, notwithstanding the efforts of the Vatican to bring it under the complete control of the Pope. The Patriarch being confined to his palace by a serious illness he was represented on this occasion by his vicar. The President of the Commission, which is charged with the administration of the civil affairs of the community, M. Aznavour, was also one of the deputation.

The vicar and those who accompanied him came to congratulate me, on the part of the Patriarch and of the Armenian Catholics, on my arrival at Constantinople, and to express their gratitude to Her Majesty's Government for the help and protection which they had always afforded to the Armenian nation. They expressed themselves in the strongest terms against being placed under Russian rule or influence, and their desire to remain under Turkish rule, admitting, at the same time, like the other heads of the Christian communities whom I have seen, that it was necessary to reform the Turkish administration, which was bad and corrupt, and that full and impartial justice should be secured to all classes of the Sultan's subjects.

The identity of the language held to me by the various deputations of Christians and others which I have received, as reported to your Lordship in previous despatches, proves, I think, beyond a doubt, what their sentiments with regard to Russia really are, even if the expression of them is admitted to have been somewhat exaggerated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 442.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 17.*)

(No. 409. Confidential.)

Constantinople, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose some further notes which Bluhm Pasha has given me with respect to the defence of Turkey in Europe, and the plan of the campaign elaborated for that purpose.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 442.

Examination in Detail of Ottoman Plan of Defence for European Turkey.

I.—*Le Plan Turque pour la Défense de l'Empire de Côté d'Europe, date du mois de Novembre*, 1877.

LORS de ma dernière mission aux forteresses Turques du Danube et du Balkan (de savoir : à Silistrie, Roustchouk, Viddine, Choumla et Varna) au mois de Décembre, 1876, et Janvier, 1877, un plan de défense contre la Russie existait déjà.

Il avait été arrêté au Conseil des Ministres Ottomans immédiatement après la publication (13 Novembre, 1876) de l'ordre de mobilisation pour six corps d'armée Russes, et servait, à cette époque là (à l'hiver passé), le Muchir Ahmed Ejoub Pacha comme base et instruction générale pour la distribution des troupes qui allaient alors se concentrer, sous son commandement, en Bulgarie.

II.—*Idées Générales du dit Plan de Défense.*

Voici ce qu'on me communiquait aux premiers jours de l'an (le 2 Janvier, 1877,) sur les points de vue principaux du projet ici en question :—

1. On se proposait de former cinq corps (Fyrkaler), conformément au nombre des places fortes sus-mentionnées : Silistrie, Roustchouk, Viddine, Choumla, et Varna.

2. Chacun de ces cinq corps devait être capable d'opérer indépendamment des quatre autres corps.

3. Par conséquent, chaque corps devait se composer des trois armes constituant l'indépendance : d'infanterie, de cavalerie, et d'artillerie.

4. Outre cela son chef devait avoir un propre Etat-major.

5. Devaient enfin être attachés encore à chaque corps : un détachement du génie, un train de pont de campagne, une boulangerie mobile, &c.

6. La forteresse dont le corps portait le nom (par exemple : le corps de Silistrie, le corps de Roustchouk, le corps de Viddine, &c.); et au rayon de laquelle il se concentrait, lui devait servir comme point d'appui ou de base et, en cas de revers, comme refuge.

7. De là résultait que le chef de chaque corps était instruit d'accumuler ses provisions à la place forte qui devait devenir son centre d'opération.

8. Ces préparatifs terminés chaque corps pouvait pivoter au cercle plus ou moins large, sur la forteresse qui lui servait de point de base.

9. Sous supposition de l'occupation et de la fortification de Kalafat par les troupes Turques, la sphère d'action du corps de Viddine pouvait être même étendue à l'autre rivage du Danube.

10. De même celle du corps de Silistrie, où l'on prit possession de la tête du pont de l'autre côté du fleuve, construit par moi à l'an 1854.

11. Tant que l'ennemi n'avait pas encore franchi le Danube, chaque corps était chargé de la défense spéciale des points de passage qui se trouvaient à son rayon.

12. Quant au chef de l'armée entière il devait s'établir, avec son quartier-général, à Choumla, pour y commander en personne le corps s'appuyant sur ce camp retranché.

13. On me déclarait à ma demande sur les motifs de cette disposition qu'elle soit la simple conséquence de la configuration géographique du théâtre de la guerre et de la position centrale de Choumla, qui n'est séparée de Roustchouk, Silistrie, et Varna, que par des distances presque égales.

14. De plus on ajoutait que, conformément à sa destination d'être le gros à proprement parler de l'armée Ottomane, le corps de Choumla devait surpasser de force chacun des quatre autres corps.

15. On accentuait notamment la probabilité que ce corps (de Choumla) pourrait être appelé de se porter, lors du passage du fleuve par l'ennemi, à Silistrie ou à une autre place forte du Danube.

16. En cas d'opération Russe par Krajova et Kladova (Gladova) il devait rejoindre le corps de Viddine, pour former, sous protection de cette place, directement au flanc de l'attaque, une masse considérable qui obligerait l'ennemi d'arrêter sa marche.

17. Enfin, on établit, en principe général, que le rôle à jouer par le dit corps (de Choumla) serait celui d'une puissante réserve, prêt notamment de se rendre à chaque point menacé du quadrilatère (savoir, des quatre places fortes de Choumla, Varna, Silistrie, et Roustchouk).

Je n'ai pas besoin de dire que ce plan de défense ne porte pas le moindre compte de l'immense importance de Varna.

De plus, qu'il ne s'occupe point de la question la plus importante, celle de la retraite éventuelle de l'armée en cas de défaite.

Selon ce qui paraît, l'auteur de l'élaborat ici en question est l'ancien général Hongrois, George Klapka ; du moins il est probable qu'il eût exercé une influence fatale aux dispositions y relatives.

III.—*Examen des Véritables Motifs pour l'Adoption par le Conseil des Ministres du Plan de Défense sus-indiqué.*

Evidemment il n'a intérêt à constater les véritables motifs de l'adoption du plan de défense sus-mentionné.

Par ce rapport là je crois de devoir faire mention d'abord du raisonnement suivant.

On dit, puisque le principal but de la Russie, à la prochaine campagne, sera d'exécuter sitôt que possible sa menace antérieure, fort souvent répétée, de l'occupation militaire de la Bulgarie, il se recommande logiquement à la Porte : de lui y opposer une résistance tenace et opiniâtre, problème dont la solution ne pourra être mieux assurée que sous condition de la défense des forteresses du Danube et du Balkan par le gros et l'élite même de l'armée Ottomane.

Les propagatants de cette assertion ajoutent encore que la défense seule des possessions Ottomanes au nord du Balkan soit la propre besogne de la Turquie elle-même : tandis que la défense de celles au sud de la dite chaîne de montagne soit l'affaire de l'Europe entière, qui ne voudrait risquer les dangers dont serait menacé la balance du pouvoir (l'équilibre politique) en cas de la prise de Constantinople par les Russes.

On termine : à quoi bon dont de réserver nos moyens et nos forces pour la défense d'une sphère que l'ennemi n'attaquera pas sans avoir bientôt toute la partie du monde sur ses bras ?

Le plan de défense Turque, que je viens d'exposer au précédent, est donc plutôt la conséquence de la politique du Cabinet Ottoman que de quelque autre chose.

Eblouis par la supposition vraie ou non de l'infaillible intervention de l'Europe après le passage par l'ennemi du Balkan, les Ministres Turques sont fort loin de ce : de pouvoir se porter compte des conséquences fatales et incalculables qui résulteront probablement de l'éparpillement irraisonnable de leur armée aux places fortes d'une seule province.

Aussi ils ne font de cas quelconque de l'éventualité (du reste fort probable) que l'ennemi briserait en très peu de temps la ténacité et l'opiniâtreté de la résistance de ces mêmes forteresses par la supériorité immense de son artillerie de siége sur celle des places.

Sous ce dernier point de vue je ne peux pas manquer de faire mention encore de ce que, lors de mon dernier séjour en Bulgarie (Décembre 1876, Janvier 1877), il n'y avait que de faibles espérances pour l'augmentation des bouches à feu rayées aux cinq forteresses jusqu'à $\frac{1}{5}$ du nombre de leurs canons et mortiers à l'âme lisse.

Outre cela le manque, aux mêmes places, d'une suffisante masse de projectiles pour le nombre restreint de leurs pièces rayées me fait sérieusement craindre que l'action de celles-ci, faute de munitions, sera bientôt paralysée.

Pour l'autre part, au but de justifier l'adoption d'un défectueux et inqualifiable plan de défense, on cherche à faire valoir qu'elle soit justifiée, par l'infériorité incontestable des troupes Ottomanes, par rapport de la tactique et du commandement ; et on ajoute que les conséquences funestes de tel état de choses ne pourraient être balancées que derrière les fosses et les remparts des forteresses.

Bien qu'on ne peut pas absolument réfuter cette assertion, elle ne justifie point pourtant l'occupation par le gros et l'élite de l'armée Turque de places fortes, qui—à l'exception unique de Varna—sont susceptibles d'être cernées hermétiquement par l'ennemi, et où les braves troupes Ottomanes, en les défendant à l'outrance, n'ont enfin aucune autre chance que de mettre bas les armes!

Je ne suis pas d'avis que ces mêmes forteresses pouvaient être confiées à une garnison se composant exclusivement de milices Turques. Au contraire, il y aurait de sérieuses raisons: d'envoyer, outre celles-ci, à chaque place forte, deux ou trois bataillons de ligne ou de rédif; de plus un bataillon d'artilleurs bien exercés et un détachement du génie. Mais tout le reste de la garnison, à laquelle ces soldats vétérans auraient servi de noyau, pouvait être formé de "moustchafiz" (milices).

Enfin, prenant en vue le même but, on dit encore: Que, puisque l'armée Turque ne dispose d'un train suffisant et puisque, par conséquent, les difficultés qui s'opposent à son approvisionnement, lorsqu'elle opère en rase campagne, sont presque insurmontables, l'unique forme possible d'une sérieuse défense contre la Russie soit celle de l'occupation par des corps entiers de positions fixes et bien ravitaillées; c'est-à-dire, de places fortes et que justement les forteresses du Danube offraient, à tel point de vue (savoir, à celui de l'approvisionnement), des facilités incomparables.

Cependant cette dernière assertion manque de porter compte de ce que Varna, comme place de mer, offre, sous chaque rapport, au moins les mêmes avantages, et que, par conséquent, tout en occupant les forteresses du Danube à la manière exposée au précédent,* le meilleur système à adopter eût été: de concentrer, sous protection des défenses de la dite ville (Varna) encore à augmenter et à renforcer le gros de l'armée Ottomane. Car de là (de Varna) il pouvait être porté, sans rencontrer les difficultés susmentionnées, par voie de mer, à Bourgas, au flanc gauche de l'ennemi qui franchirait le Balkan, et plus tard, lorsqu'il faudrait, à Constantinople ou enfin, par chemin de fer, à Andrinople, supposé que cette dernière ville serait fortifiée.

Je n'ai point trouvé une occasion pour expliquer aux autorités Turques: que la concentration du gros de leur armée à Varna ne raccourcirait, en aucun cas, la durée de la résistance à opposer à l'ennemi en Bulgarie.

Au contraire: que telle mésure serait le meilleur moyen pour prolonger la défense locale au nord du Balkan.

La position de Varna étant fort vaste: un corps faible en sera, peut-être, bientôt délogé.

Mais 30,000 à 40,000 hommes y peuvent tenir jusqu'à l'hiver prochain.

Fût-ce que l'ennemi, malgré la présence à Varna d'une armée Turque, franchirait le Balkan, puisque ses propres forces seraient assez considérables pour en pouvoir former deux armées: l'une "d'investissement" (de Varna) et l'autre "d'opération" (contre Constantinople), il voudrait donc alors mieux pour la Turquie: d'avoir encore à disposer, lorsque (avec la marche de l'ennemi en avant) l'heure suprême s'approche, d'une armée intacte et capable d'être portée à la capitale, au lieu de ne lui pouvoir opposer que quelques nouvelles et faibles formations.

Enfin je demande: quelle Puissance, lorsqu'une conflagration générale menace de surgir, voudrait se ranger de côté de l'Empire Turque, si celui-ci aurait perdu sa dernière armée?

Lorsqu'un vaste mais faible Empire, tel comme la Turquie, se trouve en face d'un agresseur formidable, et dont il a des motifs à craindre la supériorité écrasante des forces et moyens, il lui faut opposer encore d'autres obstacles que la poitrine des propres soldats, de savoir, la distance, le climat, les maladies; enfin, si la guerre se prolongerait, en conséquence de cela, l'hiver.

Par malheur le plan de résistance adopté par le Cabinet Ottoman fait comme expressément abstraction de tous les moyens auxiliaires du succès.

En effet, l'ennemi vient d'ouvrir la campagne au commencement du mois de Mai, et la défense a pris ses mesures de sorte, qu'il la pourra terminer, par la destruction du gros de l'armée Ottomane, jusqu'à la fin du Juin ou du Juillet au plus tard.

Encore un mot. Le plan adopté pour la défense de la Turquie d'Europe est tellement opposé aux plus simples conclusions du bon sens humain, qu'on se trouve presque engagé à demander aux Ministres Ottomans:—"Qu'est-ce qui vaut mieux donc pour votre Empire? La prolongation de son existence, ou sa fin subite?" Et en cas de réponse de leur côté:—"Cela peut-il faire une question? A-t-on jamais avancé, est-il possible de soutenir que le suicide se recommande aux Etats et aux peuples?" On serait autorisé, par ce qui précède, de leur répliquer:—"Oui, cela a été avancé par vous-mêmes! Oui,

* Par une garnison mixte, se composant pour la plupart de milices.

cela a été soutenu, et votre adoption du plan de défense sus-exposé en est la preuve irréfutable!"

(Signé) BLUHM.

Constantinople, Péra, ce 3 Mai, 1877.

No. 443.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 410. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 6*, 1877.

THE Porte has at length decided to take some steps to construct fortified lines for the protection of Constantinople between Buyuk-Tchekmedje and Durkos, and to adopt at the same time some measures for the defence of Adrianople. It is rather late for these works to be commenced, considering the dilatory way in which they will probably be carried on. Bluhm Pasha informed me this evening that he is to leave to-morrow morning to superintend them. I have the honour to inclose copy of a letter from him to me on the subject, which contains some suggestions for the further defences of this city.

I have telegraphed Bluhm Pasha's departure to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 443.

Bluhm Pasha to Mr. Layard.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Constantinople, 6 Mai*, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de rendre compte à votre Excellence de ce que par ordre du Muchir de Tophané, Mahmoud Damad Pacha, et du Serasker Redif Pacha, je partirai demain pour Hattim Koj, station du chemin-de-fer, située derrière la ligne à fortifier pour défendre Constantinople dite de Buyuk-Tchekmedje-Derkos.

Il s'agit d'abord d'un projet dont le Grand Maître de l'Artillerie et le Ministre de la Guerre m'ont chargé tous les deux à l'occasion d'une conférence d'aujourd'hui au grand matin.

L'exécution doit être commencée immédiatement après.

De plus Damad Mahmoud et Redif Pacha me chargeaient d'un plan pour la fortification d'Andrinople.

Après avoir terminé le projet pour les défenses à établir sur la ligne susmentionnée je me dois rendre à la dite ville pour tracer à ses environs, aux positions y relatives, les ouvrages qui doivent la protéger.

En conversant avec le Muchir de Top-hané et le Serasker j'ai cherché à leur expliquer, que pour mettre Constantinople à l'abri d'une attaque de côté de terre la fortification de la ligne de Buyuk Tchekmedje à Durkos, bien qu'elle doit devenir notre front de défense à proprement parler, ne suffit pas.

Qu'il nous faut, tout au contraire, fortifier, derrière cette première ligne, encore une seconde, entre Kutchuk-Tchekmedje et Domus-Deressi, comme position de repli, à l'intention de prolonger la résistance après la perte de celle-là.

Enfin, que nous avons l'intérêt de nous assurer par la mise en état de défense de la vieille muraille de Constantinople même, un dernier point d'appui capable de protéger éventuellement l'embarcation d'une armée qui, après avoir été délogée des deux lignes fortifiées, n'aurait d'autre parti à prendre que de se rétirer à l'autre côté (rivage) du Bosphore.

La situation et la valeur de Constantinople à l'actuelle guerre ressemble beaucoup à celle de Lisbonne aux campagnes de Wellington en Espagne et Portugal. Mais elle est plus grande encore.

Dans un memorandum adressé le 20 Octobre, 1809, par le Chef de l'armée Britannique au Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, le futur Duc dit: "Le grand objet que l'on doit avoir en vue dans la défense du Portugal c'est la possession de Lisbonne et du Tage (on y pourrait substituer à notre cas Constantinople et le Bosphore) et toutes nos mesures doivent être dirigées vers ce but. Mais il en est encore un autre étroitement lié avec le premier, sur lequel nous devons également porter toute notre attention, c'est l'embarquement des troupes Anglaises dans le cas où l'armée éprouverait un revers."

J'ai l'honneur de joindre ci-près encore quelques remarques sur l'idée (du reste de valeur fort douteuse) de noliser, pour compte du Gouvernement Turque, le grand bateau "Great Eastern" à l'intention de supplier aux moyens défectueux de transport par mer.

Je prie, &c.
(Signé) BLUHM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 443.

Suggested Purchase of "Great Eastern" for Transport of Troops.

EN méditant sur les difficultés d'envoyer un corps d'armée Ottoman de Varna à Bourgas ou à quelque autre point du littoral, à cause du nombre insuffisant des bateaux de transport à vapeur dont la Turquie dispose pour tel but, l'idée se présentait à moi que pour combler cette lacune, notamment le nolir du "Great Eastern" dont la construction date de l'an 1860, pourrait se recommander à la Turquie, ou son acquisition, fût-ce par l'offre en échange à la Compagnie possédrice de ce plus vaste bateau du monde d'un des plus forts cuirassés Turques, qui maintenant en temps de guerre aurait sa valeur et pourrait être facilement vendu, ou en réclamant dans cette même affaire d'échange la médiation directe du Gouvernement Britannique.

Quant à la capacité comme transport militaire du navire ici en question on se souviendra: qu'après les premières affaires du Peiho, lorsqu'on voulait expédier 12,000 hommes en Chine, à raison de 60 livres sterling l'un, c'est à dire dépenser 720,000 livres sterling pour le transport seul valeur qui égalait à peu près les frais de construction du "Great Eastern," le Gouvernement Britannique voulait l'acheter.

De même le vaste bateau, s'il serait encore en état de tenir la mer (?), se payerait aussi entre les mains de la Turquie par les frais qu'il épargnerait.

Les fonds sont plats et son tirant d'eau est relativement très faible, suite inévitable de ses grandes dimensions; car si M. Brunel avait voulu faire un navire de 30,000 tonneaux de déplacement proportionnel aux constructions normales il aurait eu 50 pieds de tirant d'eau au lieu de 25.

En conséquence de ce faible tirant d'eau le "Great Eastern" peut entrer dans les ports de la Mer Noire; de savoir, à la baie de Varna et de Bourgas et au port de Batoum, sans aucune difficulté; seulement quelque précaution et prudence sont exigées aux détroits du Bosphore et Dardanelles.

En principe général on peut avancer que les mouvements à opérer à la guerre prochaine, par voie de mer, sont sur de si vastes échelles, que les grands bateaux conviennent seuls, et que l'usage de ceux d'une mince dimension offrirait, tout au contraire, beaucoup des difficultés.

Résulte donc de là avec certitude que l'acquisition du "Great Eastern," sous supposition renouvellée qu'il puisse encore tenir la mer (?), serait fort avantageuse pour la Turquie.

Si de l'un côté la perte, du reste peu probable, de cet immense navire serait de sorte pour effrayer par la vaste étendue et l'énormité du désastre, sa grandeur dimensionelle de l'autre côté garantit l'unité, l'ensemble, et même la sécurité de l'action.

Une flotille des petits bateaux à vapeur est souvent dispersée soudainement par un coup.

Par contre le "Great Eastern" ne l'en ressentirait pas et porterait pour ainsi dire sa flotille en porte-manteau.

Les ports du "Great Eastern" présentant une surface totale de 15,000 mètres carrés, il y a de quoi prendre l'égal nombre d'hommes à bord.

Lors du premier essai du grand bateau ses oscillations ne dépassaient jamais la hauteur de la buste d'un homme assis sur l'avant, tandis que les petits vapeurs qui cherchaient à suivre étaient au même temps couverts d'écume et les navires à voile avaient trois ris dans les bunters. Est donc à espérer que, puis que les troupes embarquées au "Great Eastern" y seraient moins génées que sur la plupart des transports, notamment pas atteintes par la maladie de mer, leur état, immédiatement après la traversée, serait le meilleur à désirer.

Constantinople, ce 6 Mai, 1877.

No. 444.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 411. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 5*, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 381 of the 3rd instant, I have been informed at the Porte that Shefket Pasha was not to have a command at Bagdad, and that his being ordered there is considered as an exile. The Minister of War sent to me to-day to say that as there was a great want of competent officers in the army opposing the Russians in Armenia, he should be very glad to make use of Shefket Pasha there, as he was active and able; but that, as a promise had been given to me that Shefket Pasha should be removed to Bagdad, he was anxious to know before so employing him, whether I would consent to it. I replied that I could not do so without your Lordship's sanction, as I had already informed you of the promise made to me with regard to him. I accordingly telegraphed the Minister of War's request to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 445.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 412.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7*, 1877.

I HAVE been constantly urging upon the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha the importance of giving an amnesty to the Bulgarians imprisoned at Constantinople, Adrianople, Philippopoli, Tatar Bazardjik, and elsewhere, on charges connected with the events of last year. The two Ministers had repeatedly promised me that no time should be lost in proclaiming it, and the matter was brought before the Council yesterday, when it was decided to submit it to the Sultan.

His Majesty at once expressed his readiness to grant the amnesty, and I have been informed to-day that it will be announced immediately.

With regard to Mussulmans condemned to death and other penalties for outrages committed on the Bulgarians, Safvet Pasha has suggested that the sentence of capital punishment passed upon Achmet Agha and Achmet Mitto should be commuted to imprisonment with hard labour ("travaux forcés") for a long period of years, and it is proposed that they, with others condemned to minor terms of imprisonment, should be sent to Benghazi in Africa, where a British Vice-Consul will be able to testify to their sentences being properly carried out.

In the present temper of the nation it would, I think, be quite impossible to execute the sentence of death pronounced upon the two above-mentioned criminals. But transportation to such a place as Benghazi will perhaps be considered by them as even worse than death.

Shefket Pasha, who has been recalled from Rustchuk, where he was to have had a command, is now here, and I am informed that, at the express wish of the Sultan, he will not be employed again, but will be sent in exile to Bagdad.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 446.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 414. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7*, 1877.

AS your Lordship is aware, a considerable number of Bulgarians, charged with complicity in the attempted rising in the Bulgarian provinces of Turkey last year, are still kept in prison. Their number amounts, I believe, to about 200. Three or four have been condemned to death for outrages of which, I am informed, they were found to have been guilty, but against the remainder there are no very serious charges. From the day

of my arrival here I have constantly and earnestly pressed upon the Sultan and his Ministers the importance of granting an amnesty to all these prisoners, not only as an act of justice and humanity, but as one which would have a favourable effect upon public opinion in England. I had received repeated promises from the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha that, as the amnesty had been in principle agreed to by the Government, it was intended to issue it immediately; but I was informed that there were persons of great influence in the Palace who were opposing it, and were endeavouring to make the Sultan believe that to release these Bulgarian prisoners now that war had broken out might lead to serious dangers, as they were for the most part Russian agents, who would again be employed in inciting the Christian populations to insurrection.

I had also urged upon the Turkish Ministers the absolute necessity of satisfying public opinion in Europe by carrying out the sentences passed upon Achmet Aga, Achmet Metto Bektash, and others, for outrages committed upon the Bulgarian Christians. I soon found that there was no prospect whatever of prevailing upon the Porte to execute the two criminals above-named who had been condemned to death. Upon this point it was evident that nothing would induce the Turkish Government to yield; and it must be confessed that the temper of the Mussulman population is such at the present moment that it might be dangerous for them to do so.

As the repeated promises given to me by the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha as to the amnesty were not fulfilled, I directed Mr. Sandison last Saturday to read a Memorandum to them on the subject, a copy of which is inclosed. I was able, at the same time, to communicate it privately to the Sultan, and His Majesty sent to tell me that he was ready to accede to my wishes, and willing to grant the amnesty immediately.

My communication to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha produced some effect, as your Lordship will find by the inclosed copy of Mr. Sandison's report to me of his conversation with them.

On the following day I dispatched Mr. Sandison again to the Porte to satisfy himself that the question of the amnesty was really brought before the Council, and he was able to send a message to Safvet Pasha, when his Excellency was at the Council, to the effect that I held him to his promise, and that it was most important that a decision should be come to at once, and that the Sultan's sanction should be obtained with as little delay as possible. I had also again expressed to the Sultan my earnest hope that His Majesty would give it as soon as the decision of the Council was submitted to him.

I was informed yesterday that the Council had decided upon advising the Sultan to grant the amnesty, which His Majesty did at once. I am assured that it will be proclaimed immediately, and that all the Bulgarians now imprisoned for alleged political offences will be released.

With regard to the punishment of Achmet Aga, Metto Bektash, and others condemned to death, and to terms of imprisonment with hard labour for outrages on the Bulgarian Christians, I suggested that if the sentence of death could not be carried out upon those two criminals they should at least suffer a punishment of the greatest severity, and that, together with those who were to undergo imprisonment, they should be removed to some place where a British Consular Agent could see that the sentences were properly carried out, and I named Benghazi, in Africa. Safvet Pasha informed Mr. Sandison that he would agree to this arrangement if the Grand Vizier saw no objection to it.

Mr. Sandison accordingly spoke to Edhem Pasha, by my directions, on the subject, and his Highness replied that he would consent to the proposal, but that the criminals would probably consider transportation to such a place as worse than death.

I should have been glad if I could have prevailed upon the Turkish Ministers or the Sultan to have the sentence of death on Achmet Aga and Metto Bektash carried into execution, and had I seen the least chance of succeeding no efforts would have been wanting on my part to have these two men punished as they deserved for their crimes. But as I was soon convinced that no representations that I could make would avail, I considered it best to endeavour to obtain for them the next severest punishment, and Mr. Baring, who is well acquainted with all that has passed in this matter, agrees with me in thinking that nothing is more likely to strike terror in the minds of the Mussulman fellow-countrymen and friends of Achmet Aga and Metto Bektash than the knowledge that they have been sent to so distant and unhealthy a place as Benghazi, from whence they will probably never return.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 446.

Instruction to Mr. Sandison relative to Amnesty to Christian Bulgarians.

MR. SANDISON will see the Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs and will remind them of the conversations that I have had with them on the subject of the punishment of those guilty of the Bulgarian outrages and of the amnesty of the Bulgarians (Christians) who are still retained in prison at Adrianople, Philippopolis, and elsewhere. With regard to the punishment of those already condemned, nothing has yet been done. Safvet Pasha was good enough to state to me on two occasions that the amnesty to the Christian Bulgarians still in prison had been decided upon and would be announced at once. I am informed that it only remains for the Sultan to approve it, which, from His Majesty's well-known sentiments of humanity and justice, he is, I am convinced, ready to do.

I cannot impress too earnestly upon the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha the vital importance of doing something to satisfy public opinion in England upon these two points. As I have had the honour of pointing out, to save the lives of two or three men guilty of atrocious crimes, for which they were condemned to death by the Turkish Tribunal, the ancient friendship and alliance of the English people have been sacrificed by the Porte and the present unhappy war is one of the consequences.

The amnesty at such a moment as the present of the Christian Bulgarians would, to some extent lead the English people to believe that the Porte was determined to protect the Christian subjects of the Sultan and to treat them with justice. I need scarcely dwell upon the enormous advantage that such a conviction amongst the English people would be to the interests of Turkey, and the present moment is a most opportune one for the Porte to take a step which is dictated by reasons of justice and humanity.

Constantinople, May 5, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 446.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Péra, May 5, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's instructions of this day's date, I have the honour to state that there will apparently be no difficulty or loss of time in obtaining the Sultan's sanction to the amnesty proposed in favour of the Christian Bulgarian prisoners implicated in the insurrection of last year.

On my pressing the vital importance of the matter, as directed by your Excellency, upon the Porte's immediate attention, Safvet Pasha stated that he considered the question as having been already decided, to which, however, the Sultan had deferred giving the Imperial sanction, in consequence of its having been submitted to him for the purpose just at the moment that Russia was declaring war upon Turkey.

His Excellency promised, however, to lay the urgency of the case before His Majesty not later than to-morrow, when he hopes to be able to give your Excellency a satisfactory reply on the subject, inasmuch as there hardly seems to be a probability of the Sultan's making any objection to the amnesty being now granted at once.

As regards the criminals already condemned to death in connection with the Bulgarian atrocities, Safvet Pasha said that capital punishment having had to be commuted to fifteen years' imprisonment, with hard labour, the guilty shall be made to undergo their sentences in a place where there shall be a British Consular officer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 447.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 416. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 8, 1877.*

SINCE I have been here I have been constantly pressing upon the Turkish Ministers, and indirectly upon the Sultan, the great importance of forming lines of defence for the protection of Constantinople and Adrianople against an attack on the part of the Russians. Blulim Pasha had spoken to me seriously on the subject, and had informed me that nothing

whatever had been done with this object. The Turkish Government, whilst admitting the necessity of the works proposed, pleaded their inability to undertake them from want of money. On the 6th instant, Bluhm Pasha wrote to tell me that he was ordered to leave on the following morning for Buyouk-Chekmedji, the Porte having determined to select the line between that place and Dercos, to defend the approach to the capital. After giving the necessary directions for this undertaking, Bluhm Pasha will go to Adrianople to examine the defences of that city, which, I understand from him, are very inadequate for the protection of the city and ill-devised.

I have not yet heard of the works at Boyouk-Checkmedji having been commenced, and it is not easy to see where the money and men for them are to come from. The Sultan, in speaking on the subject yesterday, expressed his great anxiety, I am informed, that no delay should take place in constructing them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 448.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 418. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 8, 1877.*

A PERSON who enjoys the confidence of the Sultan informed me to-day that His Majesty, in speaking to him yesterday of the war and his troops, said that some of his Ministers had always opposed the admission of his Christian subjects into the army, but that he had determined that they should be no longer excluded from it, and that he had that morning signed an Imperial Order, placing them in this respect on the same footing as Mussulmans. I telegraphed this to your Lordship.

I believe that this statement can be relied upon, as it comes from a trustworthy source, but there are influences at work in the Palace which may yet interfere with the Sultan's good intentions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 449.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 420. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 8, 1877.*

I INFORMED your Lordship by telegraph on the 6th instant that the Minister of War had sent to tell me that, as Shefket Pasha was an able and active officer, he was very desirous of employing him in the army in Armenia, in which there is a great scarcity of competent officers; but as a promise had been made to me that Shefket would be recalled from Rustchuk to be sent to Bagdad, he hesitated to give him a command in Asia without my consent. I replied that, as I had informed your Lordship that Shefket Pasha was to be removed to Bagdad in a kind of exile, I could not agree to this proposal without your sanction.

I accordingly telegraphed on the subject to your Lordship.

In the meanwhile I requested a friend to mention the matter to the Sultan, and to point out to His Majesty the bad effect that the employment of Shefket Pasha in a high and responsible position would produce on public opinion in England.

As soon as His Majesty learnt what had occurred, he expressed his determination not to allow Shefket Pasha to be employed in any way in the public service, adding that he had been given to understand that the Pasha was to go to Bagdad in exile, and not to have a command there, and that it was his intention that such should be the case. His Majesty then called for writing materials, and wrote at once in this sense to the Grand Vizier. His Highness, who was not aware that I was acquainted with what had passed, told me in the evening that he had received His Majesty's orders to that effect, and I trust that they will be obeyed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 450.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 423.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 8, 1877.*

IMMEDIATELY on receiving Mr. Consul Reade's despatch No. 19 of the 1st instant (copy forwarded to your Lordship by him) containing a report of the outrages committed by Hadji Osman and other Mussulmans of Domagila, near Rustchuk, upon some Bulgarian Christians, I communicated a copy of it to Safvet Pasha, and represented to his Excellency in strong terms the necessity of taking immediate steps to inquire into the matter, and to punish those who were guilty of the acts described by Mr. Reade. I also communicated to his Excellency a telegram sent to me by Mr. Reade with reference to disorders at Hirsova, and in the neighbourhood of that place.

Safvet Pasha telegraphed immediately for information on both matters, directing at the same time Sadyk Pasha, Governor of the Danube, to punish those who might be found guilty in connection with the Domagila affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 451.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 426. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 9, 1877.*

YAKOUB KHAN, the Kashgar Envoy, leaves Constantinople to-day for London. He had, he informs me, a long audience of the Sultan the day before yesterday, in which His Majesty dwelt much upon the great importance of all the Mahomedan States of Asia uniting to prevent Russia from carrying out her ambitious designs against Turkey and Central Asia, and of looking to England as their only friend for help and advice.

Yakoub Khan has seen a good deal of the Sultan, and will be able to give your Lordship some interesting information with respect to His Majesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 452.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 429.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7, 1877.*

I HAVE done my best in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions to ascertain whether there be any truth in the reports that have reached your Lordship of the concentration of Persian troops near Mohammerah. I spoke to Safvet Pasha, who informed me that he had heard nothing on the subject, but that he would telegraph for information to the Governor of Bagdad. I also addressed myself to the Persian Minister, who had given me repeated assurances that his Government had no intention whatever of arming against Turkey, or giving her any cause of uneasiness by assembling troops on her frontiers. He expressed his conviction that there was no truth in the rumour to which I referred, but promised to telegraph about it to Teheran.

This morning I saw the Minister of War, who stated to me that the Governor of Bagdad had replied that some secret agents he had employed had brought him information that Persian troops, armed with Chassepôt rifles, were assembled near Mohammerah, but for what object it was not clear. The Minister of War seemed to attach little importance to this statement, adding that he did not see what the Persians could do at Mohammerah; and that the Montefik tribe, which occupies the Turkish side of the Shat-el-Arab, was quite sufficient to repel any attack that they might venture to make on Turkish territory.

But I have now received a telegram from Colonel Nixon stating that a Shahyadeh had arrived at Mohammerah with a force and two guns, and that his movements were considerd suspicious, as there is no occasion for the concentration of Persian troops there.

As I informed your Lordship in my telegram No. 65 of the 7th instant, I have been

informed by Safvet Pasha, and the Persian Minister that the difference which had arisen between the Turkish and Persian Governments with reference to the islet in the Shat-el-Arab was being settled in a satisfactory manner. It is possible that this was not known to the Persian commander in Khuzistan, who may have collected some troops to take forcible possession of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 453.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 430. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 9, 1877.*

I HAVE used all the efforts in my power to prevent any interruption in the good relations between Turkey and Persia, and to remove any cause of difference between them. The Persian Minister has repeatedly assured me that Persia has no wish whatever to quarrel with her Mahomedan neighbour, but that, on the contrary, her interests as a Mussulman and independent Asiatic State are bound up with those of Turkey. She is anxious above all things, he maintains, to be on the most friendly terms with Turkey, and even to unite with her in opposing the aggressive designs of Russia. I sent Mr. Sandison two days ago to Mohsin Khan to speak to him with reference to the reported concentration of Persian troops on the Turkish frontier in Arabistan. The Persian Minister appears to have been anxious to satisfy me that the rumours on this subject were unfounded, and that there is no intention on the part of Persia to attack or menace Turkey. With this object he read to Mr. Sandison a large amount of correspondence with his Government. He added that Persia was willing to forget all differences with Turkey, to forego all claims upon her, and even to enter into an offensive and defensive Treaty with her, on condition that she would recall the decision of Khalil Pasha, and grant to Persia the same privileges as are enjoyed by the subjects of the European Powers; that is to say, that they should have the benefit of the Capitulations. It is not likely that the Porte will ever agree to this suggestion. It has already had too much experience of the consequences of these exceptional conventions to extend them to the subjects of another Power.

I have the honour to inclose copy of Mr. Sandison's Memorandum of his conversation with Mohsin Khan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 453.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Pera, May 9, 1877.*

ON the occasion of my communicating to Mohsin Khan the reported concentration of Persian troops near Mohamera, to which he gave the most solemn denial, his Excellency entered into a long confidential conversation on the subject of the policy of his Government towards Turkey, which he affirmed was one of friendship and good neighbourhood. In support of the assertion, his Excellency read out to me the whole of the secret and confidential correspondence with his Government since the month of December last down to a recent date. I am bound to confess that the same good feeling towards Turkey, and the same desire to be on the best of terms with her, pervade the correspondence. This consisted in cyphered telegrams, transcribed in two voluminous books, amongst which was one marked secret and confidential, which directed Mohsin Khan to make overtures to Midhat Pasha, then Grand Vizier, under the seal of secrecy, and proposals for an offensive and defensive alliance between Turkey and Persia without, however, entering into any written correspondence whatever with the Porte, until further instructions, lest anything on record, by falling into the hands of the Russian Embassy, should place Persia in an unpleasant position towards Russia. Midhat Pasha, he said, had received his overtures rather favourably, when the fall of his Highness put an end to all further "pour parlers" on the subject.

His Excellency went on to say that it was absurd for the Turks to suppose for one moment that Persia, as a Mohametan Power, could possibly exist without Turkey, which was the seat of the Califate, or that the Persians could, as true Mussulmans, ever wish to

see the Empire of Russia substituted for that of the Sultan in the East. Such being the general feeling of his countrymen, he had exhausted every means in his power (I may say Safvet Pasha admitted the fact to me), with a view of bringing about a good and sincere understanding with Turkey. Since the beginning of the insurrection in the Herzegovina, the Porte, he was sorry to say, had met his efforts in a very different spirit, by adding to old grievances the affairs of Medina, and the unjustifiable imprisonment of the Persian Consul at Brussa by the Governor-General.

Nevertheless, he would willingly continue to persevere in a friendly and conciliatory policy, and he would be happy, at the same time, he said, to be able to rely upon your Excellency's good offices for the establishment of a better understanding with the Porte.

There were many important points connected with Persian interests left in abeyance, which he scarcely hoped to see eventually settled; but he would gladly abstain for the future from all representations on the subject, provided the Porte could be induced, in its turn, to recall or cancel Halil Pasha's declaration whilst he was Minister for Foreign Affairs some five or six years ago, by which Persian subjects in Turkey are placed on the same footing as all Turkish subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 454.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 431.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 9, 1877.*

IN my despatch No. 379 of 2nd April, I inclosed a report drawn up by Mr. Stoney, of the number of persons supposed to have been killed during the Bulgarian insurrection, and of the amount of property destroyed. Mr. Stoney arrived here three days ago and was good enough to call upon me. His account of the present state of affairs appeared to me to be so interesting that I requested him to make a Memorandum upon the subject which I might forward to your Lordship. He has done so, and I have the honour to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 454.

Memorandum by Mr. Stoney.

DURING six months spent in the western districts of Philippopolis and the eastern portion of Sophia as special agent of the Central Relief Committee of Constantinople, I have availed myself of the ample opportunity afforded me for making inquiry as to the number of killed and missing in the villages to which we have given relief.

The result of my inquiries, corrected to the 28th April, has been forwarded to your Excellency by Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert.

I have visited upwards of 150 villages, Bulgarian, Turkish, and mixed; of these some have suffered only by the passage of irregular troops, others have been untouched, and in fifty-four Bulgarian and six Turkish villages have lives been sacrificed.

In compiling my list, I have derived my information from house-to-house visitation, not once only, but on several occasions, and from examination of the chief men of each village, who were not likely to have understated their losses.

The number of killed and missing—the latter counted by their friends among the dead, which was given me on my first visit, has in no case been increased on subsequent examination, but in several notable instances it has been considerably diminished.

This is accounted for by the fact that missing members of families are constantly returning from distant villages where they had taken refuge and where many are still lying hid.

Taking these facts into consideration, I am of opinion that, were my list revised some months hence a reduction would be shown of from 10 to 15 per cent. on the total loss given in the list of 28th April last. My relief work having been confined to the districts above mentioned, the losses in the villages north of the Balkans are not included in my list of killed.

The country I have visited is, generally speaking, quiet, and the inhabitants are busily occupied in their farming operations. Occasionally one hears of acts of oppression, and the Circassians of the mountain villages follow their usual trade of cattle-lifting when opportunity occurs, but the most is made of every such case, and I believe that life and property are as secure in these districts as it has been in any part of the Turkish Empire visited by me in the course of the last ten years. The provincial authorities are well disposed to protect the people, but the police force at their disposal is insufficient to keep up the necessary patrol.

The attitude of the Turkish inhabitants at the present crisis is eminently dignified and self-restrained; no boasting or noisy demonstrations are indulged in.

The Bulgarian population, if left to themselves, would never, in my opinion, attempt another rising; they are not made of the stuff from which revolution springs; they only wonder now how it was they allowed themselves to be led into making so foolish a demonstration as that of last year. Nevertheless, should an overwhelming force of Christian invaders sweep over the Balkans, the Bulgarians might be carried along with those they have been taught to look upon as their friends and protectors.

(Signed) W. L. STONEY.

No. 455.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 17.)

(No. 432.) *Constantinople, May* 9, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 361 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose copy of a report, addressed by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Blunt, on the supplies of cattle and grain contained in the district of Philippopolis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 455.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopoli, May 5, 1877.

Sir,

IN reply to your telegram of the 27th ultimo, I have to state that, with the exception of the region devastated during the disturbances last year, the district of Philippopoli is still in a comparatively flourishing condition. The gradual restoration of public security, chiefly brought about by the energy of the Mutessarif and the Chief of the Police, has conduced to the resumption of industry and trade everywhere, save in the region above mentioned, where the Bulgarian population, partly from the demoralizing effects of their sufferings, partly because bereft of cattle and agricultural stock, and partly influenced by the uncertainty of the political situation, work only just as much as is necessary for existence, or remain plunged in a kind of sullen despair.

As regards the actual stock either of grain or cattle, no exact statement is obtainable. Official statistics are too notoriously imperfect to be accepted unreservedly; it is, therefore, only upon uncertain data that any return can be based.

From all the information I can gather it is evident that the district—at all times one of the richest and most productive in the Empire—still contains an abundant stock of cattle and sheep.

Of grain, on the other hand, the existing supplies are far below the mark, owing, not so much to the impoverishment of certain districts as to the enormous exportation that has of late been occasioned by the increasing value of corn in the markets of Western Europe.

From the average official returns of the sheep and goat tax (those of the past year are not yet available), and from unofficial estimates of the annual consumption and exportation of sheep and cattle, allowing also for the live stock lost during the disturbances of last year, the existing stock may, I believe, be safely calculated at not less than 1,000,000 sheep and goats, and 450,000 cattle exclusive of buffaloes.

By far the greater portion of this stock is owned by the sub-districts or cazas of Tatar-Bazardjik, Philippopoli, Hasskeui, Tchirpan, and Eski-Zaghra. The barren and mountainous cazas of Sultan-Yeri and Akker-Tchelebi (which form the south and south-east divisions of the sandjak) are exceedingly poor in live stock, producing goats chiefly, and no oxen or sheep for export. The same may also be said of the south parts of the cazas of Philippopoli and Tatar-Bazardjik, which lie among the mountains of the Rhodope chain.

The following figures will give a notion of the exportation of grain to foreign parts that has taken place since last harvest, and particularly during the past two or three months:—

	Kilehs of Constantinople.		
Wheat	2,200,000	to	2,400,000
Maize	2,000,000		2,200,000
Rye	900,000		1,000,000
Barley	200,000		300,000
Oats	50,000		70,000

The comparatively small stock remaining in the district is made up as follows:—

	Kilehs of Constantinople.		
Wheat	300,000	to	400,000
Maize	600,000		700,000
Rye	200,000		300,000
Barley	100,000		150,000
Oats	30,000		40,000
Rice	60,000		65,000

Concerned at the rapidly rising exportation of grain, the Government lately thought proper to issue a prohibition on it. The prohibition has, however, been raised by a subsequent Decree as far as regards the sending of grain to Constantinople and other parts of Turkey in Europe, and prices for wheat and barley being high in the capital, it is probable that all the remaining stock of those cereals will shortly find its way thither. But the maize, rye, and oats in store not being in demand at Constantinople, may be expected to remain in the district until the prohibition on this export is removed.

I may add that although a smaller area than usual has been sown this year, the weather, so far, has been such as to favour the anticipation of a good average harvest, which represents a yield for this sandjak of 720,000 quarters.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 456.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 17.)

(No. 8. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, May* 5, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, with a copy of its inclosure, relative to the quiet state of this vilayet, as reported in my cyphered telegram of yesterday's date to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 456.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, May* 5, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of Mr. Stoney's letter of the 3rd instant, the purport of which I telegraphed in cypher to your Excellency, as well as to Her Majesty's Secretary of State on the 4th instant. I also inclose extract of a letter from a Greek correspondent at Eski Zaghra, commending the present demeanour of the Turkish population. And the accounts which I receive from other districts, from Slimnia in particular, concur in representing the country as very quiet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 456.

Mr. Stoney to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, May 3, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE but just returned from a tour from Philibé to Samakof, and back by Ichtimann, Vitrina, &c. Everywhere quiet prevails. Turks are eager for the Russian war, but perfectly well behaved towards the Bulgarians.

A few of the usual Circassian raids on cattle reported, but not more than usual.

Yours truly, &c.

(Signed) W. L. STONEY,

Special Agent, Central Relief Committee.

Extract of a Letter from Eski-Zaghra, dated April 29, 1877.

(Translation.)

"Ici il y a grande tranquillité, surtout après la déclaration de guerre. Et c'est très satisfaisant que les Turcs d'Eski-Zaghra, qui étaient si irrités l'année passée contre les Chrétiens, ne montrent maintenant aucune haine, et envisagent les événements avec beaucoup de calme."

No. 457.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 246.)

St. Petersburgh, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

IN conformity with your Lordship's instructions I have addressed a note to Prince Gortchakow, a copy of which is annexed, refuting, as entirely unfounded, a statement lately made in the "Russki Mir" that previous to the declaration of war by Russia, the Earl of Beaconsfield had stated his conviction, founded on the reports from Colonel Wellesley, that Russia would not go to war.

I have also the honour to annex a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley reporting his correspondence with the editor of the "Russki Mir" on this subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 457.

Lord A. Loftus to Prince Gortchakow.

St. Petersburgh, April 30 / May 12, 1877.

Mon Prince,

I AM informed by the Earl of Derby that a telegram from the Berlin correspondent of the "Times" has appeared in that journal, stating that a correspondence had taken place between Colonel Wellesley and the editor of the "Russki Mir" respecting an assertion in the "Russki Mir" to the effect that before the Russian declaration of war was made Lord Beaconsfield expressed his conviction, founded on reports from Colonel Wellesley, that Russia would not go to war.

I am instructed to state to your Highness, on the authority of Her Majesty's Government, that the assertion contained in the "Russki Mir" is entirely without foundation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 2 in No 457.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to Lord A. Loftus.

St. Petersburgh, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

IN a leading article of the "Russki Mir," of May 1, 1877, appeared the following paragraph:—

"A few days before the publication of the Imperial manifesto, Lord Beaconsfield stated his conviction that Russia would never decide on commencing war, and at the same time based this opinion on the fantastical reports of the British military agent at St. Petersburgh."

In consequence of this, I addressed the following note to the editor of the paper in question:—

"M. le Rédacteur, "*Ambassade d'Angleterre, Vendredi, le* $\frac{1}{13}$ *Mai/Avril*, 1877.

"Dans le numéro 103 du 'Monde Russe' je remarque la phrase suivante:

[Here follows paragraph in Russian.]

"Ayant aucune connaissance du discours de Lord Beaconsfield, auquel allusion est faite, je viens vous prier, M. le Rédacteur, de vouloir bien m'informer où et quand il a eu lieu.

"Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) "Lieutenant-Colonel WELLESLEY."

On the 6th instant the following reply appeared in the "Russki Mir":—

"In No. 103 of the 'Russki Mir,' among other things, we stated that a few days before the publication of the Imperial manifesto, Lord Beaconsfield expressed his conviction of the utmost improbability of war on the part of Russia, and at the same time based his opinion on the reports of the British military agent at St. Petersburgh.

"With respect to this remark, Colonel Wellesley, the English Military Agent here, addressed a letter to us in which he begs to be informed when and where Lord Beaconsfield expressed himself in the manner attributed to him by us.

"Although the military agent puts to us concerns a remark of ours with regard to Lord Beaconsfield, and not relating to Colonel Wellesley, we nevertheless consider it necessary to explain that our expressions, which have given rise to a misunderstanding, were founded on private and newspaper intelligence, and that, therefore, we are unable to satisfy with accuracy the request of Colonel Wellesley.

"We can only say that Lord Beaconsfield, as we are informed, expressed his opinion privately, and that he strengthened this opinion by reference to the reports of the Military Agent at St. Petersburgh.

"To what an extent the reports of which we have spoken have been circulated, not only in our society, but also in the foreign press, can be seen, for instance, from the following remark in the last number of the Berlin 'Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung' of the 2nd of May:—

"'We are informed from trustworthy sources that England has been led into error by the erroneous reports of its Embassy with regard to the imaginary unreadiness of Russia for war.'"

Thus ended the correspondence which passed between myself and the editor of the "Russki Mir," to which the Berlin correspondent of the "Times" has referred.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY,

Military Attaché.

No. 458.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 450.)

Vienna, May 14, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 427 of the 6th instant, I inclose herewith, a copy of Count Andrassy's note to the Governments of Russia and Turkey relative to the free navigation of the Danube, which, in conformity with instructions from his Excellency, was communicated to me to-day by Baron Orczy.

Your Lordship may, however, have already received a copy from Count Beust; but as it appears that Count Andrassy, in leaving instructions for its communication to Her Majesty's Government, arranged that it was not to be forwarded to England until intelligence was received of its delivery to the Governments of Russia and Turkey, it may not have reached London as soon as I hoped that it would do.

I am told by Baron Orczy that both the Governments to whom it is addressed are disposed to give the declaration asked for.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 458.

Baron Langenau to Baron Herbst.

Vienne, le 6 Mai, 1877.

EN présence de la guerre qui vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie, nous avons dû nous préoccuper de la situation faite à notre commerce et à notre navigation par les opérations militaires qui sont à la veille de se dérouler sur les bords du bas Danube.

L'Article 109 de l'Acte Final du Congrès de Vienne de 1815 a décidé en thèse générale, que la navigation des rivières séparant ou traversant plusieurs Etats sera entièrement libre et ne pourra, sous le rapport du commerce, et sauf les règlements de police, être interdite à personne. Cette disposition a été confirmée en ce qui concerne le Danube, par l'Article XV du Traité de Paris de 1856. Aux termes de ces stipulations il ne peut être apporté aucun obstacle, quel qu'il soit, à la libre navigation du Danube.

Les transactions internationales que je viens de rappeler n'impliquent point, il est vrai, la neutralité absolue de la voie fluviale. En dehors des ouvrages et établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube, ainsi que du personnel de cette Commission, déclarés neutres par l'Article 21 de l'Acte Public de 1865, la liberté de navigation garantie sur le Danube, nous sommes obligés d'en convenir, ne saurait empêcher que le cours inférieur du fleuve, de même que ses deux rives, ne puissent être enveloppés dans la lutte qui vient de s'ouvrir.

Les devoirs qui découlent de l'attitude de neutralité que nous avons jugé à propos d'adopter en face du conflit actuel nous interdissent de faire prévaloir le droit de libre navigation sur les mesures qui pourraient être prises par les belligérants dans l'intérêt de leurs opérations militaires.

Mais tout en admettant que les incidents de la guerre puissent amener des entraves passagères pour la navigation Danubienne, nous nous reconnaissons le devoir de réserver, dès à présent de la manière la plus formelle, auprès des Puissances belligérantes, le principe de la liberté de cette navigation du Danube que l'Autriche-Hongrie est intéressée en première ligne à voir maintenu :—

Ad 1. Votre Excellence est donc chargée,

Ad 2. Vous êtes donc chargé, M. le Baron,

Ad 1 et 2. de porter officiellement à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial les observations qui précèdent. Vous voudrez bien ajouter que, si nous consentons à nous résigner aux inconvénients inséparables de l'état de guerre sur la ligne du Danube, il est bien entendu que cette situation exceptionnelle ne pourra en aucune façon être invoquée comme un précédent au préjudice de la liberté de navigation ; que les mesures restrictives de cette liberté qui seraient rendues indispensables par les exigences de la guerre se règleront sur les principes internationaux ; que ces restrictions ne dépasseront pas les limites tracées par la nécessité la plus impérieuse et qu'aussitôt que le cours des opérations de la guerre le permettra, les Puissances belligérantes s'entendront avec nous pour rétablir la liberté de la navigation sur le Bas-Danube.

Vous voudrez bien, en outre, M. le Baron, prier le Gouvernement Impérial de nous faire parvenir le plus tôt possible une déclaration conforme à ces indications.

Recevez, &c.

No. 459.

The Governor-General of Crete to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 17.)

(Télégraphique.) *La Canée*, 16 *Mai*, 1877.

TELEGRAMMES d'Athènes, transmis aux journaux d'Europe, font un tableau émouvant de la situation de l'île. Ces nouvelles étant complètement dénuées de fondement, veuillez les démentir. Parfaite tranquillité règne dans l'île. Les habitants s'occupent paisiblement de leurs travaux agricoles.

No. 460.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 393.) *Paris, May 16*, 1877.

My Lord,

M. N. CALLIMAKI CATARGI came to me this afternoon and told me that he had been charged by the Roumanian Government to read to your Lordship a despatch which

they had addressed to him, and to place a copy of it in your hands. A severe attack of rheumatism made it impossible for him to undertake a journey to London at this moment, and he should, therefore, he said, be very much obliged if I would be so good as to transmit the copy to your Lordship. He then gave me the paper, which I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith.

It contains an explanation of the circumstances in which the Convention of the 16th of April for the passage of the Russian troops through Roumania was made, and it proceeds to say that the Roumanians can no longer entertain any doubt that they are at war with Turkey, and that it is the Sublime Porte itself that has declared war against them

M. Callimaki Catargi informed me that he was about to deliver a copy of the same despatch to the Duc Decazes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 460.

M. Cogalniceano to M. Catargi.

M. l'Agent, *Bucarest, le $\frac{2}{14}$ Mai*, 1877.

LA publication au "Moniteur Officiel" des Conventions conclues entre le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie et le Gouvernement Princier, et la protestation de la Sublime Porte adressée à ses Représentants près les Puissances étrangères, le 2 Mai, vous ont mis au courant de notre situation actuelle. Le moment me semble donc opportun pour consigner ici les causes déterminantes de l'attitude qui nous est prescrite par les circonstances exceptionnelles au milieu desquelles nous nous trouvons.

Vous n'ignorez pas, M. l'Agent, que dès le début du soulèvement des populations en Herzégovine, en Bosnie, et en Bulgarie et de la lutte entreprise par la Serbie et le Monténégro contre la Turquie, le Gouvernement de Son Altesse Sérénissime, déférant aux conseils des Puissances Garantes, accepta les obligations qu'impose la neutralité la plus absolue ; cependant si une attitude de cette nature ne pouvait être acceptée qu'au détriment de nos relations morales et matérielles avec les populations de la rive droite, il nous était permis d'espérer que notre conduite trouverait sa compensation dans le règlement définitif de notre neutralité.

Aussi, lorsque plus récemment la guerre entre la Russie et la Turquie se présentait comme une éventualité imminente, les Grandes Puissances et la Sublime Porte furent saisies par nous de la question de l'opportunité de transformer et d'élever à la hauteur d'un droit formel les obligations dérivant pour nous d'une neutralité nécessaire à tout le monde, et dont nous avions admis l'exercice sans aucun avantage pour la Roumanie. Cependant, soit isolément, soit réunies en Conférence à Constantinople, les Grandes Puissances, invoquant l'insuffisance des stipulations relatives à cette haute question, et ne tenant compte ni de la gravité de la situation, ni de notre juste perplexité, nous refusèrent la considération d'une demande que les événements n'ont que trop justifiée postérieurement.

De son côté, la Sublime Porte, usant d'un système d'ajournement que ses propres intérêts eussent dû lui faire répudier depuis longtemps, s'o stina à ne pas vouloir régler les questions pendantes depuis des dizaines d'années entre le Gouvernement Impérial et le Gouvernement Princier. Je vous citerai comme fait frappant de sa conduite vis-à-vis de nous, que, même à l'heure où son intérêt réclamait une entente avec notre pays, elle continua de lui refuser la reconnaissance du titre de Roumanie, qui pourtant avait déjà reçu la sanction de toutes les Puissances Garantes.

Livrés à nous-mêmes, sans direction comme sans appui, nous ne devions pas tarder à nous trouver en présence de démarches qu'une guerre imminente laissait nécessairement entrevoir, et que l'attitude d'indifférence de la part des Grandes Puissances devait naturellement autoriser. La Russie nous proposa loyalement de traiter avec elle relativement au passage des armées Impériales par notre territoire. Son langage était celui d'une Puissance qui, ayant concouru à l'édification de l'Etat Roumain, et participant à la garantie de son existence politique, n'entendait point démentir son œuvre par la violation de ses droits. D'ailleurs, la Russie se présentait à nos yeux comme le mandataire moral des Grandes Puissances dans l'accomplissement d'une mission qui avait été solennellement concertée et tracée par l'Europe elle-même dans des résolutions publiques et collectives. Que si, au mépris de notre sentiment légitime de conservation, et méconnaissant le caractère élevé des ouvertures qui nous étaient faites, nous leur eussions opposé un refus irréfléchi et dépourvu, d'ailleurs, de toute assistance, la Roumanie se fût trouvée livrée de ses propres

mains à une violation fatale de son territoire, de ses droits et de ses intérêts les plus chers.

Je ne m'étendrai pas d'avantage, M. l'Agent, sur les considérations impérieuses qui nous conseillèrent d'adhérer aux propositions du Gouvernement Impérial de Russie, et je laisse aux Conventions conclues le $\frac{4}{16}$ Avril le soin de démontrer combien les intentions loyales du Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg et nos justes précautions se sont trouvées d'accord pour assurer à notre pays, avec les ménagements les plus scrupuleux pour nos intérêts matériels, la garantie sans réserve de nos droits comme nation.

Les premières stipulations des Conventions conclues portent clairement en elles-memes les mobiles loyalement avoués des deux contractants, et ne donnent lieu à aucune ambiguité. En effet, si devant une situation assurément décisive et reconnue, sinon d'une manière officielle du moins tacitement, la Roumanie a cru devoir accéder aux propositions du Gouvernement Impérial de Russie, le Gouvernement Princier a la confiance d'avoir non seulement épargné à la Roumanie les périls d'une occupation militaire forcée, mais de lui avoir assuré le respect de son individualité et de ses institutions, en même temps que la garantie formelle du maintien de ses limites territoriales. Quelque modeste qu'elle soit, la Roumanie avait le droit de se préoccuper de sa conservation, lorsque, par sa position géographique, elle se trouvait placée, en quelque sorte, au foyer d'une guerre devenue désormais inévitable. Ce but, commandé par les nécessités de son existence, nous croyons l'avoir atteint, et nous aimons à espérer que personne ne voudra en contester la légitimité.

En concluant les Conventions du $\frac{4}{16}$ Avril nous croyions également avoir écarté toute incertitude sur notre attitude dans le conflit Oriental. Le caractère de ces stipulations et, j'ose dire, la sobriété qui les distingue, devaient dissiper le moindre doute touchant la loyauté de nos intentions par rapport à nos liens avec la Turquie, liens consacrés par les Traités Européens qui sont mentionnés dans nos Conventions avec la Russie.

Nos relations avec la Sublime Porte n'avaient pas besoin, ce me semble, d'être déterminées par une entente diplomatique analogue à celle du $\frac{4}{16}$ Avril, et que l'on aurait voulu nous voir conclure également avec la Turquie. Essentiellement préoccupés peut-être de la valeur de ces relations avec elle, les inspirations d'une telle politique ne se rendaient évidemment pas compte des conséquences périlleuses qu'elle aurait eues pour la Roumanie. D'ailleurs plus justement soucieux de notre sécurité et du maintien de cette neutralité, dont on nous laissait la responsabilité exclusive, nous n'aurions pu raisonnablement souscrire une pareille Convention, sans transporter par cela même et sciemment le théâtre de la guerre en Roumanie.

En effet, dans les conditions où nous avons traité avec le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie, il nous était au moins permis d'espérer que la Roumanie serait préservée des conséquences désastreuses d'une guerre, à laquelle nous aurions ardemment désiré de demeurer étrangers. Mais qui ne voit qu'en ouvrant notre territoire aux armées du Sultan, nous aurions appelé fatalement chez nous la guerre avec toutes ses horreurs? Je m'abstiens de rappeler ici les excès qui, avant même la rupture des relations entre la Russie et la Turquie et sans aucune provocation de notre part, ont été commis sur notre territoire par les avant-gardes indisciplinées des troupes Ottomanes du littoral du Danube. Il suffit de mentionner de semblables méfaits, pour montrer les dangers auxquels la Roumanie eut été exposée si la guerre y eut été portée.

On ne saurait donc accuser ni nos intentions ni notre prudence, parce que nous avons agi comme nous l'avons fait. Nous sommes, au contraire, convaincus d'avoir contribué, dans la mesure de nos moyens, à la localisation de la guerre et à son éloignement de notre territoire.

Après ce qui précède, il me paraît superflu de relever le caractère peu réfléchi de certaines propositions, suivant lesquelles les troupes Roumaines étaient appelées à coopérer avec l'armée Ottomane contre l'armée Russe. Une proposition de cette nature porte en elle-même sa réfutation, d'autant plus qu'elle ne nous a été faite qu'à la veille de l'entrée des armées Russes en Roumanie.

Après avoir expliqué ainsi notre attitude, je n'hésite pas à affirmer ici, au nom du Gouvernement de Son Altesse Sérinissime le Prince Charles I, que nos intentions ont été en tous points conformes avec nos devoirs. Si d'une part nous avons voulu par les Conventions, nous prémunir contre les périls d'une situation entourée d'imprévus, d'autre part il n'entrait nullement dans nos vues de rompre nos liens avec l'Empire Ottoman, ni de chercher à tirer profit des circonstances qui pourraient se présenter en notre faveur.

Tels étaient les principes de notre ligne de conduite. Dès le début nous avions pris la ferme décision d'y persévérer, à moins que la Roumanie ne fut provoquée par la Turquie elle-même. En dehors de ce dernier cas, nous n'entendions nullement constituer la Roumanie partie belligérante avec la Russie contre l'Empire Ottoman. La mission de

l'armée Roumaine dérivait tout naturellement des déclarations antérieures que maintes fois nous avons faites à la Sublime Porte et à tous les Cabinets étrangers.

Malheureusement la continuation des incursions dévastatrices au milieu de nos populations inoffensives, et opérées sur une échelle de plus en plus grande, la capture de plus de 200 navires, et de leur cargaison, capture effectué jusque dans nos ports et même dans l'intérieur de nos rivières telles que le Tiu, la Talomitza, et l'Olto, l'emploi du pétrole pour incendier et détruire les navires, qui ne veulent pas suivre les monitors Turcs, et enfin le bombardement par ces derniers et par les batteries de la rive droite du Danube de nos villes et de nos villages, qui n'étaient préparés ni pour la défense ni pour l'attaque, et où il n'y avait aucun soldat Russe ou Roumain, nous laissaient peu d'espoir qu'il nous serait possible de conserver une attitude dont nous n'aurions cependant voulu nous départir à aucun prix. Deux dernières circonstances sont venues dissiper entièrement cet espoir et inquiéter notre sécurité politique: c'est d'abord l'insulte qui nous a été faite par la suspension des fonctions de notre Agent à Constantinople, comme si l'Agent Diplomatique de Roumanie était un fonctionnaire Turc et ne jouissait pas des immunités accordées par le droit des gens aux Représentants étrangers. Vint ensuite la dépêche que Son Excellence Safvet Pacha a adressée le 2 Mai courant aux Représentants de la Turquie près les Puissances Garantes.

Les dispositions hostiles à notre endroit manifestées par la Sublime Porte dans cette dépêche, les menaces qui s'y trouvent à l'adresse de notre pays et de ses institutions, menaces suivies d'un bombardement général de toute notre rive, ne nous laissent plus aucun doute que nous sommes en guerre avec la Turquie, et que cette guerre nous a été déclarée par la Sublime Porte elle-même.

En face de cette attitude du Gouvernement Ottoman à notre égard et de ses actes d'hostilité patente, qui, d'après les principes du droit public, constituent un état de guerre manifeste, le Gouvernement Roumain remplit un devoir, en établissant nettement devant les Puissances Garantes et devant l'opinion publique de l'Europe entière, que c'est la Sublime Porte elle-même qui a rompu les liens existant entre elle et la Roumanie, et que par conséquent nous ne pouvons que lui renvoyer la responsabilité qu'elle essaye de faire peser sur nous par sa dépêche du 2 Mai.

En présence de tous ces faits, dont la gravité ne saurait échapper à l'esprit juste et éclairé du Cabinet Britannique, le Gouvernement de Son Altesse le Prince Charles I ne saurait rester spectateur impassible. Nous sommes obligés de prendre dès aujourd'hui des mesures, telles que les comporte la situation créée par la Turquie elle-même, afin de repousser par la force les actes d'agression auxquels la Roumanie est en butte de la part des armées Ottomanes.

Forts de notre droit et de la justice de notre cause, et comptant sur la sollicitude des Puissances Garantes à notre égard, nous ferons tout ce que notre devoir envers le pays nous impose pour défendre notre sol, pour sauvegarder nos institutions, et pour assurer notre existence politique.

Veuillez donner lecture et copie de cette note à Son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Je profite, &c.
(Signé) COGALNICEANO.

No. 461.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 120.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 17, 1877.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 381 of the 3rd instant, respecting the appointment of Shefket Pasha to a command at Shumla, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the steps which you took with a view to obtain the cancelling of this appointment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 462.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 121.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1877.

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration, in communication with the Legal Advisers of the Crown, the instructions issued by the Porte to the Turkish Commander-in-chief on the Danube with regard to the treatment of neutral vessels on that river, which formed the inclosure in your Excellency's despatch No. 371 of the 30th ultimo, and their attention has been specially directed to the statement that contraband of war and the vessels carrying it would, when duly determined by the Court, be liable to confiscation.

Her Majesty's Government are advised that the instructions may be justified by military reasons, but I have to instruct you to inform the Porte that Her Majesty's Government will require the fullest indemnity for every loss or damage which any of Her Majesty's subjects may actually sustain in consequence of their being put into execution.

With reference to that part of the instructions which says, "En tout cas la contrebande de guerre est saisissable et entraine la confiscation du navire et de toute la cargaison," you will call the attention of the Turkish Government to the general rule applicable to vessels captured with contraband of war as accepted by all modern writers on international law, according to which the contraband part of the cargo alone is liable to capture, the other goods and the ship being released.

It must be observed, however, that there are exceptions to this general rule, such as in a case where the same person owns both the ship and the contraband goods, or where the ship carries false papers, or any fraud is proved against her.

You will state at the same time that the Porte, by subscribing the Declaration of Maritime Law at Paris (April 16, 1856), formally placed on record its assent to the milder practice which the European nations have agreed henceforth to adopt in regard to the respective rights and duties of belligerent and neutral Powers, and you will inform the Porte that Her Majesty's Government cannot allow the condemnation of ships and their whole cargo, the property of British subjects, to be in all cases the consequence of the ships having on board some contraband articles.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 463.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 122.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 380 of the 3rd instant relating to the question of the protection of Russian subjects and interests in Turkey by the German Government; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the advice which your Excellency addressed both to Safvet Pasha and to M. Karatheodory, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on this subject, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 464.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 123.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE the instructions which you addressed to Sir A. Kemball upon his proceeding to the head-quarters of the Turkish army in Asia, copy of which were inclosed in your despatch No. 394 of the 4th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 465.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 124.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 390, Confidential, of the 3rd instant, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the advice which you gave to Safvet Pasha on the subject of the measures which the Porte proposes to adopt with regard to the Roumanian Agent at Constantinople, and the natives of Roumania established in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 466.

The Earl of Derby to General Menabrea.

Foreign Office, May 17, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

REFERRING to the communication which your Excellency was good enough to make to me on the 11th instant, expressing the wish of your Government to associate itself with that of Her Majesty in making a common representation to the Porte on the necessity of properly providing for the security of the lives and property of the Europeans who are resident at Jerusalem and elsewhere in Palestine, I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency that I have been in communication with Mr. Layard with a view to ascertain whether the information received by him in this respect corresponds with that reported by the Italian Consul at Jerusalem to the Foreign Office in Rome.

Instructions were at the same time given to Mr. Layard that, should he be of opinion that there is imminent danger to the foreign residents in Palestine, he should impress upon the Porte the necessity of providing for their safety; and Mr. Layard has since reported that the result has been the issuing of orders by the Porte to the War Minister to leave a sufficient force at Jerusalem for the protection of foreigners and Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 467.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 200. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 191 of the 11th instant, I transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a note I have addressed to General Menabrea,* containing the substance of the reply returned by the Porte to Mr. Layard's representations, urging the adoption by them of measures for the protection of the lives and property of European residents in Jerusalem and in Palestine generally.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 468.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17, *at night.)*

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 5 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Vice-Consul at Trebizond, dated yesterday evening:—

"Four iron-clads bombarded and burnt Soukoum-Kalé and two small towns. Upwards of 10,000 Dibasians revolted, killed Russian garrison; 300 ask arms and munitions, which steamer arrived fetched yesterday evening [from ?] Batoum."

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* No. 466.

No. 469.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 17, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 7 P.M.

FROM Consul at Erzeroum, dated yesterday :—

"Bombarding of Kars commenced noon to-day. Turks made a sortie immediately, but were repulsed. Cannonading very severe.

"Soukoum-Kalé taken by Circassians yesterday. Heiderah, Jellal, and Zelan tribes are joining the Russians in considerable numbers, especially the two last."

Consul reports to-day :—"General Kemball has just left for head-quarters at Zinevin."

No. 470.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May* 17, 1877.

I LEARN privately that Emperor of Russia intends going on the 8th of June with Grand Dukes Vladimir and Serge to Ploeschti, the present head-quarters of Grand Duke Nicholas, it is supposed with the object of profiting of the first favourable moment for concluding peace.

Count Schouvaloff arrived last night.

No. 471.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 10·30 P.M.

I SPOKE strongly to the Sultan at my private audience about outrages committed by the Circassians. His Majesty immediately sent a message on the subject to the Grand Vizier, who informs me that, in consequence, Circular orders have been sent to all the provincial authorities directing them to deal most severely with those marauders and to put a stop at once to their excesses.

No. 472.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 11 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER informs me that 10,000 men embarked to-day for Soukoum-Kalé and other points of the east coast of the Black Sea, where there is already a serious rising of the population. This expedition is to be reinforced by mounted Circassians who are in Asia and by others to be sent from Constantinople. Transports will touch at Batoum to receive 15,000 breech-loading rifles for distribution among revolted tribes; an attempt will be made to land part of the troops at Redout-Kaleh in order to cut the railway to Tiflis. It is hoped that the Russian communications will thus be completely cut off. Two months' provisions are also being sent to Circassian coast.

No. 473.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 11 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 14th instant, Porte states that it must on principle apply to Russian vessels passing through Suez Canal the same measures as are enforced against them in other parts of the Empire. The draft of a communication to that effect to the Viceroy has been prepared.

No. 474.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 17, 1877, 11 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of 15th instant the Porte regrets that it cannot entertain application for further delay in favour of neutral vessels taking in cargo at Taganrog and Sea of Azoff.

No. 475.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 17, 1877, 11·5 P.M.

WITH reference to telegram from Consul-General at Bagdad, I have been assured most positively to-day by Persian Minister that no hostile measures will be taken by Persian troops now at Mohammerah, and that question of the island in the Euphrates is settled for the present.

No. 476.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May* 18, 1877.

RUSSIAN head-quarters will probably be immediately transferred to Bucharest, and operations will be directed from hence.

No. 477.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 18, 1877, 11·30 A.M.

THE following received to-day from Consul Holmes, dated 12th :—

"Freeman arrived. Affair of Glamoseh misrepresented. No bride outraged. Confusion and inaccuracy regarding affairs at Otchievo, which was a known resort of insurgents, and which was attacked because Turks had information that Christians were assembling there to destroy Mussulman villages of Orashitza and Tchukowo. Turks declare they were resisted. Details impossible by telegraph. Full report by next post."

No. 478.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 18.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, May* 18, 1877.

I HAVE read to Minister of Foreign Affairs, who returned to Vienna yesterday, your Lordship's letter to Russian Ambassador in London of the 6th instant. He said its contents have apparently ceased to be a secret, as they were already discussed in the press. With respect to the Suez Canal and Egypt, he sees no probability of their safety being endangered, nor does he believe that the conquest of Constantinople is contemplated by Russia, though he appears to be prepared for her claiming the freedom of the navigation of the Straits, a question on which I think that he concurs in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, though I did not ask him to state his views upon it. As he asked for explanations as to the meaning of your Lordship's observation respecting the Persian Gulf, I said you had only referred to it lightly, but that it was a question which some persons might consider to include Russian conquests in Armenia.

He did not seem to think the reference to the Emperor of Russia's promises respecting Bulgaria is sufficiently explicit, as he said it might be long before Russia considers the peace and safety of the Christian population secured. He also apparently

feared that your Lordship's reservation might be interpreted by Russia as leaving her more free action than is desirable.

He looks forward anxiously to the arrival of the Memorandum of the question which Count Beust reports will be shortly forwarded to Vienna.

No 479.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BRITISH steamer "Urbino," which left England on April 14 with cargo of rails for Odessa, is reported to have been stopped at Constantinople. Inquire and report grounds of detention.

No. 480.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 26.)

Foreign Office, May 18, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 65, Political, of the 30th ultimo, and I have to state to you that I approve the advice which you gave to M. Kogalniceano to persevere in a course of strict neutrality during the war between Russia and Turkey.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 481.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 175.)

Foreign Office, May 18, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to request your Excellency to inform Count Andrassy that Her Majesty's Government concur in the observations contained in the note inclosed in your despatch No. 450 of the 14th instant, respecting the maintenance of the principle of the freedom of the navigation of the Danube, and that they have instructed Her Majesty's Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople to support the representations on the subject to be made by their Austro-Hungarian colleagues.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 482.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 14. Political.)

Trebizond, April 30, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch of the 23rd November last No. 25, Political, I have had the honour to state that, "if the road (to Erzeroom) is not repaired without delay, it will become too bad, even for Turkish endurance, and perhaps so at a moment when its usefulness will be of more importance than ever."

What was foreseen has, unluckily for the Turks, taken place when the enemy has crossed the frontier.

The road is impassable, and there are at this moment here fifty-four 4-ton Krupp cannons for Erzeroom, which it is impossible to carry to Erzeroom. There is great difficulty in conveying even the several thousand cases of ammunition which have accumulated here.

The Governor-General had requisitioned 4,000 carts, drawn by oxen, to forward them; but the order was suspended in consequence of the impracticability of the road. It is true that there is still a great quantity of snow on the peaks to be crossed; but it is not an insuperable obstacle.

A great part of the munitions is now sent by country-boats to Surmenah, about eighteen miles east of Trebizond, and thence conveyed through mountain-paths to Baiboort to avoid the damaged parts of the road.

It is stated in extenuation that there is a saving of time, the distance being shorter. This is true enough; and it is to be wondered that when the road was devised it was not cut through Surmenah, which would have shortened it, I am assured, by as much as three days' caravan march.

In November last the engineers of the province reckoned that a few hundred pounds might have sufficed to prevent further damage in those parts of the road which were essentially threatened by the winter and spring floods.

Shortly after the engineers were dismissed, and the road left to take care of itself; the consequence was, that in several places it was completely washed away by the river on a large extent.

One of the engineers, who now serves at a trifling salary in the hope of being reinstated in his functions, informed me that at Gumushané he had just been compelled to cut a provisional path over the mountain to enable the caravans to pass; that in the presence of this state of things the Government had voted 1,500*l.* for the repairs of that part of the road alone; that the other urgent repairs were also executed; but that 8,000*l.* were required for the restoration to a good state of the road in this province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 483.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 17. Political.)

Trebizond, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Ottoman iron-clads "Mahsoodie," "Orkanié," "Azizie," and the despatch-boat "Talieh," hove in sight of Trebizond in the afternoon of yesterday, and that Vice-Admiral Hassam Pasha, under whose command the Batoum squadron is placed, landed and had an interview with the Governor-General of this province.

The Vice-Admiral told him that it was useless to station, as he was asking him to do, a vessel at Trebizond, the Turkish squadron of Batoum being always at hand.

The iron-clads, which had on board a regiment of Syrian troops, left a few hours after for Batoum, whither they were bound.

The Custom-house of Trebizond has been officially informed yesterday that the Turkish squadron, after having destroyed Fort St. Nicholas, had, between Poti and Sookoum Kalé, sunk a Russian merchant-vessel loaded with salt, and captured another with a similar cargo, which was now detained at Batoum.

No mention is made of the fate of the crew of the sunken vessel.

The news reached here this morning that a French steamer, the "Meuse," usually plying between Marseilles and Poti, had been conveyed to Batoum by a Turkish cruizer, but released shortly after.

It is credited here that ten or twelve of the fastest steamers of the Russian Company have been armed by the Government for the purpose of chasing Turkish vessels and of making raids on these coasts. Hence the desire of the Governor-General to have, not an armour-plated, but a wooden vessel to protect this town and its neighbourhood.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 484.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

No. 35. Political.)

Salonica, May 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a despatch which I have this day ddressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, with reference to the gangs of

brigands in this district, and my observations on the difficulties met with by the local authorities here in repressing and punishing them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 484.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Salonica, May 4, 1877.

Sir,

IN transmitting to your Excellency the account of the gangs of brigands in this and the neighbouring districts, which I have the honour to do under inclosure, I do not expect that any remedy can be found for the evil, because, in reality, the Government have not the means nor the power of repressing these disorders. The absorbing question—the preparations for war, has for months been sending away all the available soldiers to the front, and the Vali has not above 130 zaptiehs, a number totally inadequate even for the police of this city.

Under this state of things it is but natural that the members of the local Government who have farms in the vicinity of Salonica should be lukewarm in their efforts, and even try to screen the delinquents when brought to trial, in self-defence of their properties, since they have not the means of preventing robberies.

Another difficulty lies in the disorganized state of the Government itself, from the continual change of Governors and Sub-Governors, which creates confusion in the different departments, and much unnecessary expense.

This also is a consequence of the anticipated war, for Governors of provinces are taken from their Governments in order that they may be sent to command important strategic posts, and then the Sub-Governors are removed by their successors to place creatures of their own.

Your Excellency's telegram respecting Her Majesty's Proclamation has been affixed by me on the outer door of the Consulate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 484.

An Account of the Gangs of Brigands in the District of Salonica, with the exception of Serres, Drama, and Monastir.

(Translation.)

1. ABOUT Mount Olympus there are two gangs of Christian brigands, one under Panayotee Caloyero, numbering about seventeen, and the other under Kara Batak, of about twenty. No particular outrages have been signalled, but the soldiers who are sent in pursuit of these gangs in the environs of Caterina, Veria, and Allusona, quarter themselves on the villagers and give occasion for many complaints.

Musselmen Brigands.

2. The gang of Kara Hussein (all Mussulmen) infest the districts of Kalkiss and Doircin, about seven hours distant from Salonica, and have done so for thirteen years, committing all sorts of excesses.

3. The gang of Sakal Omar and Latif Omar, of the village of Kuisanlee, district of Cassandra, not many hours distant from Salonica: these are deserters from the army. On the 18th April (old style) they cut to pieces a peasant named Anatasio, because he said he had no money to give them. A short time ago Kamil Bey, Kaïmakam or Governor of Cassandra, proposed to the Vali of Salonica a plan by which this gang might be taken and destroyed, but no ear was given to his proposal. And although the inhabitants of Cassandra were well satisfied with this Kaïmakam, the local authorities of Salonica, about a month ago, removed him from office, and sent a Kaïmakam inefficient for the work, and thus disorders are on the increase.

4. There are four gangs of Albanian brigands: one of Said Ghegha, another of Schiakeer, another of Younez Ghegha, and the fourth of Ishan, placing under contribution the well-to-do Christians of the districts of Vodina and Veria. Latterly they came upon the Wallachian shepherds, who are by name Tanmoth, Nikola, Minzio, and Teeko. On

the 29th of April these threw themselves at the feet of the Greek Archbishop of Salonica and informed him that these four gangs of robbers had demanded that they should raise 2,000 Turkish liras by apportioning the sum among them, according to the means of each, in default of which they would not be permitted to take their sheep to graze in the usual summer quarters, a locality not far from the Kaïmakamlik of Yenidgé Vardar, and distant about seven hours from Salonica. This was told me by the Archbishop himself, who added that he had sent in two petitions to the Pasha on this subject, and at the same time I saw there the persons sent by the shepherds to the Archbishop trembling with fear, and saying that the authorities had only promised that necessary measures would be taken.

8. A gang of Mussulman robbers, only half an hour's distance from the city of Salonica, particularly about the Sub-Government of Lanzara, where not long ago they wounded many Christians and killed five.

9. Two gangs, one of Ziolak and the other of Elmass, numbering about twenty individuals. These have latterly requisitioned the village of Stavrios, distant about eight hours from Salonica, killed a Christian and his son, and beat another so unmercifully that his life is in danger.

10. Another gang about fifteen days ago has been formed by five zaptiehs, or policemen who have deserted from the ranks, and others have increased their number to twelve, but till now they have not committed any misdeeds.

These eight gangs of brigands composed of Mussulman robbers pass the day generally in the farms of Turks of note, which are superintended by Soubashees, or stewards, where other bad characters are also wont to assemble, and at night go out to commit depredations on the villages. It is easy to foresee that the number of brigands is ever on the increase, from the daily desertion of Redifs and Mustafiz, who run away to escape the conscription.

The Sandjaks of Monastir, Drama, and Serres are in the same position as above-noted.

The Musteschiar (Counsellor) of Salonica was sent, by orders from Constantinople, to investigate the matter at Pozar. He condemned twelve persons to be imprisoned after a proper trial, and on this account he has incurred the enmity of many.

The local authorities do not take the measures necessary to repress these disorders and free the country of these brigands.

When these last are brought before the Tribunals, excuses are found for them and they are declared innocent.

(Signed) GIOVANNIS BIZZO,
First Interpreter to the Consulate at Salonica.

Salonica, May 1, 1877.

No. 485.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 36. Political.)

My Lord, *Salonica, May* 10, 1877.

AS I find an opportunity of an extraordinary French messageries boat which has touched at this port, coming from Constantinople and going direct to Marseilles to-day, I have the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch I addressed yesterday to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, as embodying the latest news from this Consulate. My previous despatches Nos. 34 and 35, Political, of the 3rd and 4th instant, which have gone by our usual route through Brindisi or Trieste by Austrian Lloyd's steamers, will probably arrive in England after the present despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 485.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, May* 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of the arrival here, on the 6th, of his Excellency Dervish Pasha, Governor-General of this vilayet, that his Firman was read on the 7th, and that he received the Consuls the same day.

After the Firman was read his Excellency made a speech in the sense and interest of order, which I am told produced a good effect and was appreciated.

The "Pallao" left for Volo and Smyrna on the 4th, remaining here only two days. In the absence of any one of Her Majesty's ships, and as there was no Governor here, I telegraphed on the 3rd instant to the Admiral-Superintendent at Malta, suggesting that a man-of-war be sent here to protect British interests, and received for answer that my telegram had been communicated to the Commander-in-chief at Corfu.

Her Majesty's Proclamation of Neutrality excited a feeling of regret and ill-will against England for a day among the Mahommedan population, but it has completely subsided, and everything is quiet and likely to remain so, as our new Vali has the reputation of being an energetic man.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

No. 486.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 41. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, May 7, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35, Political, of the 29th instant, I have the honour to report that only two battalions and a few irregulars now remain in Mirdicia, the rest of the troops having been withdrawn to Scutari, Podgoritza, and Antivari.

I understand that some of the most influential of the Mirdite Chiefs are at present in Montenegro, and from rumours, not altogether untrustworthy, reaching me, I think it is not impossible that a renewal of troubles in Mirdicia may arise before long.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 487.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 435.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 10, 1877.*

THE foreign population of Constantinople and its suburbs having been again alarmed by rumours that the Porte was about to proclaim the state of siege in the capital, I inquired of Safvet Pasha whether these rumours were well-founded, and earnestly advised him not to have recourse to this measure. His Excellency assured me that the Government had no intention of doing so, at any rate for the present, and that the reports to which I had alluded had, no doubt, arisen from the fact that the Chamber of Deputies had passed a law authorizing the Government to proclaim the state of siege when they considered it necessary to do so. Mr. Sandison, by my instructions, has spoken several times on this subject to the Turkish Ministers, and I inclose copy of his report with reference to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 487.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Pera, May 7, 1877.*

IN compliance with your Excellency's instructions I again spoke to Safvet Pasha respecting the proclamation of the state of siege in Constantinople. His Excellency stated in reply that the Porte has taken no decision whatever on the subject, and that, at all events, the rights and privileges of the foreign subjects, under the capitulations, shall be respected.

Safvet Pasha seemed to think that the state of siege will not be proclaimed at all, inasmuch as there appears to be very little necessity for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 488.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Corfu, May 15, 1877.*

I DO myself the honour to transmit copy of a report received yesterday from the Vice-Consul at Santa Maura relative to the escape from Janina, and subsequent appearance on the Greek frontier, of a band of brigands, headed by the notorious Stuppa and others of like evil fame.

This report confirms the accuracy of the information contained in my despatch No. 4, Political, of the 8th instant.

With reference to the statement in the penultimate paragraph of the same despatch, relative to the ill-treatment of a party of females by Bashi-Bazouks, I have since learnt from an English traveller, who was at Janina at the time of the occurrence, that, on the whole, the treatment of the women was not quite so atrocious as had been rumoured, but that it was perfectly true that the officer in exerting himself to protect them had got severely wounded by their brutal assailants.

The organization of the reserve force decreed at the last sitting of the Greek Parliament is proceeding very heavily here, as in all the southern islands.

The measure, considering the season of the year, is particularly ill-timed, as the able-bodied men among the peasantry are more than required for the cultivation of the fields and vineyards.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure in No. 488.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Sir, *Santa Maura, May 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a report is current in town that certain brigands, to whom amnesty had been granted by the Turkish Government some time ago, and who had been permitted to stay at Janina under police surveillance, disappeared from that town a few days ago, crossed the Greek frontier, and reached Palcambela, a village in the neighbourhood of Nouitza. According to one account, the band is composed of twenty-six men, led by the notorious brigand Chiefs Stuppa, Marinli, Zatsonitzo, and Kapo Yorgaki, while another account, of a Turkish source, reduces the number to fourteen, including the above-named Chiefs.

As the report of the evasion is confirmed by a local Turkish source, I have reason to believe it is correct; but the other particulars, as to the appearance of these unwelcome visitors on this side of the frontier, still await confirmation. The Eparch having a question put to him this morning on the subject, replied that "he had not heard of it," which, in my opinion, is somewhat singular, considering the vicinity of the locality named.

I have been also informed that a telegram passed through this station on Thursday, 10th instant, stating that three brigands had crossed the frontier in the neighbourhood of Caravassara; that the Greek military authorities of the district received orders to pursue them; and that there were strong grounds for believing that they had cut the telegraph wires between Caravassara and Missolonghi; indeed, telegraphic communication between the above two stations was interrupted on Wednesday.

I shall not fail to report, by wire if need be, any further views of this affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS ONOFRIO.

No. 489.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 18, 1877, 7·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of the 11th instant, the Governor of the Danube has informed the Grand Vizier that, after communication with the Serdar Ekrem, he thinks English tugs and lighters should not be authorized to ascend the Danube into

Austrian waters: firstly, because of the impossibility of acquiring the certainty that they will not be employed by the enemy for hostile purposes; and secondly, for the reason that, if this concession were made to English tugs and lighters, similar facilities could not be refused to those of other nations.

No. 490.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bosna-Serai, May 19, 1877.*

FREEMAN started this morning to inquire into impalement cases.

No. 491.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 19, 1877, 2 P.M.*

I RECEIVED visits yesterday from the Austrian and German Ambassadors and Italian Minister, who had just arrived. Austrian Ambassador expressed a strong desire to act with me, and made many friendly protestations as to agreement of his Government with the policy of Her Majesty's Government.

German Ambassador was reserved and apparently Russian in his tendencies.

Italian Minister said that he was to inform Porte that Italy was resolved to maintain strictest neutrality, and not to engage in any adventures.

No. 492.

Sir E. Thornton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 143.)

My Lord, *Washington, May 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that my Turkish colleague, Aristarchi Bey, addressed a note on the 1st instant to Mr. Evarts, informing him that Russia had declared war against Turkey, and expressing his hope that the United States would cause the same neutrality to be observed as had been insisted upon during the last war between those two Powers.

I understand that Mr. Evarts, in his reply, stated that the Government of the United States would see that its laws with regard to neutrality should not be violated, and would take care that no such violation should be committed within the jurisdiction of the United States by either of the belligerents.

Mr. Evarts told me in conversation, on the 5th instant, that no similar intimation of the existence of war had been received from the Russian Minister. He added that, considering the distance of the United States from the scene of the war, the issue by the President of a proclamation of neutrality was of little importance; but that he did not think that it would, in any case, be issued until the Government had been informed by the Representatives at Washington, of both the Powers, of the existence of war between them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 493.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 82. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Athens, May 12, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 76, Confidential, of the 5th instant, I was sorry to learn yesterday from my Ottoman colleague, whom I met in M. Deligeorge's ante-room, that he had received a telegram from the Vali of Yannina, stating that Stoupa and the other brigands who had escaped thence had crossed the frontier into Greek territory, and

that it was in consequence of an invitation from a certain Catarakia, a retired brigand chief, who, after being amnestied in the reign of King Otho, had been leading a respectable and peaceful life upon his farm in Northern Greece, that they had left Yannina in order to meet him at a certain point and to form a band with him. Their object, according to Photiades Bey, might be the invasion of one of the Turkish provinces, rather than the perpetration of acts of brigandage in Greece.

He endeavoured to exculpate the conduct of the Vali of Yannina in the matter, by assuring me that the brigands at that place had not been under surveillance, but that they were at liberty to move about as they pleased; that such was their position when the Vali arrived there to assume the Government of the province, and that he was, therefore, not responsible for their departure.

As Photiades Bey proceeded to explain to me and to my French and Italian colleagues who were present that the liberty thus enjoyed by the brigands was in accordance with the stipulations of a Convention between the Hellenic Government and the Porte, I was obliged to correct him, and to say that there could be no such Convention, as the Hellenic Government had always remonstrated against the liberal terms which had been granted to the brigands when they had surrendered to Mahomet Ali Pasha. He then reverted to his argument that, at any rate, the present Vali was not responsible for the acts of his predecessors.

When I afterwards went in to see M. Deligeorges, he did not appear to have heard from any other source than through the notification just before made to him by Photiades Bey, either that Katarakin had left his home or that the other brigands had entered Greece. I found him more irritated than ever against the Ottoman authorities, and inclined to insist that they must have intentionally let loose the brigands, with the short-sighted idea that they would give sufficient occupation to the Hellenic army to prevent any invasion of Ottoman territory.

I, of course, endeavoured, as I had done in our previous interview, although to little purpose, to persuade him that the incident must have been rather the result of negligence than of malevolence. He unfortunately still believes that Photiades Bey had telegraphed to Yannina in time to prevent the escape of the brigands, if that had really been an object to him (Photiades) and to the Vali.

I fear that the mutual recriminations with which the question is being discussed is likely to have an injurious effect upon the relations between Greece and Turkey at such a time of excitement as the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 494.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 83.)

My Lord, *Athens, May 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the translations of extracts from the "Stoa" of Athens, and from the "Eubœa" of Chalcis; the first relating to the arrest on the night before last of a band of thirteen men armed with breech-loading muskets, ready to start for the neighbouring Ottoman provinces, and the other relative to the arrival at Chalcis of a vessel from Mount Athos with seven passengers having the appearance of monks, under the orders of one of their number named Photis Papoudoff, and with cases containing New Testaments, Russian and Turkish money, and, it is also said, gorgeous priests' vestments and church ornaments.

M. Deligeorges had informed me yesterday of arrests having been made the night before of persons who, if I did not misunderstand him, had already embarked on board a passenger steamer for Volo, with the intention of exciting insurrection in Thessaly. They are probably the same persons as those mentioned by the "Stoa," and I believe that, after being interrogated and warned, they were set at liberty.

As regards the monks of Mount Athos who had arrived at Chalcis, I learn from a private source that their object was to go from thence to Albania, in order to assist or promote a rising in that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure in No. 494.

Extract from the "Stoa" of April 30/May 12, 1877.

(Translation.)

ON Thursday night the Director of Police arrested a fresh band of thirteen men armed with breech-loading muskets, and others ready to set out for the neighbouring provinces. The Director is certainly commendable for having done his duty; but we observe to Government and to all politicians that they are bound to give their serious attention to these movements repeated twice this week, as we learn that as yet it has not been attested whether Lelondas and his associates really intended to commit acts of brigandage. These incidents, we have reason to believe, will be repeated as long as we remain in a state of indecision. In our opinion, though indisposed to encourage any person to participate in such movements, we do not hesitate in confessing our satisfaction at the sight of this attempt of rising from our indolence.

The "Eubœa," of Chalcis, contains the following:—

"A few days ago a vessel of Koumi arrived here from Mount Athos (according to her master's statement) without her ship's papers and on board of which were seven passengers without passports, who had the appearance of monks, and were under the orders of Photis Papoudoff, one of their number. On a search being made cases were found full of New Testaments; the monks had on them some watches, Turkish sovereigns, silver roubles, and Russian bank notes. It would be well to learn in detail, through an inquiry, the views of these holy fathers."

No. 495.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 412.)

Paris, May 19, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me some days ago that M. de Lesseps had gone over to London to lay before your Lordship a plan for securing the free passage of ships through the Suez Canal. The Duke went on to say that M. de Lesseps had sent over a draft, which had, he seemed to think, been favourably regarded by your Lordship; but his Excellency added that, before discussing the matter, he would wait till M. de Lesseps had come back himself, and given further information. At the first blush, M. de Lesseps' draft did not, the Duke said, appear to be quite complete, inasmuch as it did not provide with sufficient explicitness against belligerents attacking each other in the Canal or its neighbourhood.

On the 16th instant M. de Lesseps called upon me, and gave me copies of a note and draft which he had put into your Lordship's hands, and which your Lordship had, he said, very courteously promised to take into consideration.

I had yesterday morning the honour to receive your Lordship's despatches Nos. 290, 291, 292, and 293, all of the 16th instant, giving an account of what had passed in London with M. de Lesseps, and directing me to make known to him the view taken by Her Majesty's Government of his plan.

The Duc Decazes came to see me in the afternoon, and, in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions, I informed him of what had passed in the matter. I explained to him that Her Majesty's Government had been compelled by circumstances to take the initiative in making an intimation to the Russian Government, and consequently to the Turkish Government; and I added that they did not doubt that their having done so would meet with the concurrence of other neutral Powers, and especially of the French Government, which had common interests with them in the Suez Canal, and with whom they were especially desirous of acting cordially in all matters relative to the Canal and to Egypt.

In order to make the Duc Decazes fully acquainted with all the proceedings, I showed him your Lordship's despatch No. 290, which contains your instructions as to the communication to be made by me to M. de Lesseps.

The Duke read it carefully through, expressing as he did so, his assent to several passages in it. Having finished it, he said that he understood from it that Her Majesty's Government did not think the moment opportune for endeavouring to make a general international Convention or agreement about the Canal, but that they thought it right to insist that the free navigation of the Canal should not be interfered with, and that it should not be injured nor made the scene of hostile operations.

The Duke said that he entirely concurred in these views, and should be glad to join ("s'associer à") Her Majesty's Government in giving effect to them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 496.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 413. Confidential.)

Paris, May 19, 1877.

My Lord,

YESTERDAY, at the close of the conversation about the Suez Canal, of which a report is made in my immediately preceding despatch of to-day, I proceeded (in execution of the instruction contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 292 of the 16th instant) to give the Duc Decazes, confidentially, a copy of your note to Comte Schouvaloff of the 6th instant.

The Duke read it through in my presence with great apparent interest, and observed that he thought it might put every one in accord.

He did not appear disposed to explain his meaning more fully.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 497.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 19, 1877, 6 P.M.

CONSUL at Erzeroum telegraphs following, dated to-day, 2 P.M.:—

"Russians before Ardahan carried the two forts called Emirogulu yesterday, but abandoned them this morning, probably after spiking the guns. Losses unknown. In cavalry skirmish near Kars, three days since, Russian General was wounded. Commander-in-chief presses for reinforcements of all kinds. Russian left wing has formed entrenched camp on Ipekyil between Bayazid and Diadin. Circassian excess much on the increase here. Christians without help; considerable alarm.

No. 498.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tyflis, May 19, 1877.

GENERAL FRANCINI goes to Tehran to-day. 20th and 39th Divisions and other troops appear to have been at Ardahan, where the Russians claim victory. They say fourteen battalions and Pasha surrendered. Nothing effected near Batoum or Kars.

No. 499.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, May 19, 1877, 7 P.M.

THE fourteen battalions mentioned in my last telegram were not taken prisoners but retreated.

No. 500.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 19, 1877, 11 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of 18th instant, steam-ship "Urbino" arrived from Odessa this morning and will leave to-morrow. No question of detention.

No. 501.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 19, 1877, 11·30 P.M.*

GRAND VIZIER has called upon me to say that he has information that the Servians are arming with intention of again making war upon Turkey; and that if the Russians find that they cannot cross the Danube as easily as they expected, will, notwithstanding the assurances given to Austria, pass into Servia. He begged me to state this to Her Majesty's Government.

It appears to me important that Mr. White should be back at Belgrade.

No. 502.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 20, 1877.*

IT is rumoured that the Emperor of Russia will come to assist at the passage of Danube, accompanied by the Czarevitch. The latter will probably accompany the army into Bulgaria for a short time.

No. 503.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 20, 1877.*

WITH reference to Mr. Layard's telegram respecting the Servian armaments, Gastrell reported yesterday that the Hungarian Prime Minister, who had been to Vienna to see Minister for Foreign Affairs, is said to have stated on his return that it is believed Servia will not move at present, but that Austria-Hungary is prepared to occupy Belgrade if necessary.

No. 504.

Consul Watkins to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 2.)

My Lord, *Larnaca, Cyprus, April 30, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Lordship's despatch, dated 27th March ultimo, by which I am directed to report any acts of violence that may take place, or any outrages that may be perpetrated on the Christian inhabitants of this province, and give instructions to all the Vice-Consuls and Consular Agents under my orders.

No occurrence of the kind has come to my knowledge at present, but great uneasiness prevails amongst the Christians at Larnaca, and especially at Nicosia, lest a sudden attack be made upon them by the Moslem population should the reverses of war provoke them to feelings of revenge.

The idea of insecurity among the Christians is aggravated by the knowledge that whilst they are utterly destitute of the means of defence, their Moslem neighbours are more or less well armed.

Since the news of the declaration of war reached us, three days ago, the excitement is more manifest than before, and the desire for a ship-of-war, of whatever nationality it may be, is gaining ground, so much so, that the Representatives here of France, Italy,

Germany, and Austria, have intimated to me their intention of asking their respective Governments that one may be appointed to visit this and other ports of the island occasionally if it is not convenient to have a vessel permanently stationed here.

I have no doubt that the presence of a British ship-of-war would have the desired effect on the Moslems if they should meditate any violence, and also reassure the Christians, who feel the need of protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. WATKINS.

No. 505.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 18. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, May 5, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, with its accompanying inclosures, from which your Lordship will see that I have thought it my duty to request Mr. Layard to advise that one of Her Majesty's ships be despatched hither for temporary service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 505.

Consul Sandwith to Mr. Layard.

Canea, Crete, May 2, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch just received from the British Vice-Consul in Candia reporting the apprehensions entertained by the Christian inhabitants of that town in consequence of the licence of the Turkish soldiery stationed there, and requesting the occasional visit of an English man-of-war.

The previous week he had reported to me the murder of a Christian peasant by two Mussulmans.

I have not found M. Calocherinos in the past to be an alarmist, and should it therefore be not inconvenient that one of Her Majesty's ships be detached from the Mediterranean squadron for a season for service on this coast, I would beg your Excellency to request the Admiral to despatch a vessel here, for the double purpose of calming the fears of the Christians and keeping in check the insolence of the Mussulman inhabitants, which is encouraged by the presence among them of somewhat undisciplined troops. Those stationed in this neighbourhood have latterly taken to beating the Christian villagers, who, I hear, are keeping a list of their offences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 505.

Vice-Consul Calocherino to Consul Sandwith.

Candia, Crete, April 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to state that the murderers of Michalis Kephalakis, as I stated in my last despatch of the 24th instant, have been discovered, named Assan Sherifakis and Alis Kadenakis.

The Christian inhabitants of this town are in a state of consternation by the proceedings of the Redifs, who ill-treat the Christians and beat them in the streets; and not only the Redifs, but even the Cretan Turks, after the proclamation of the war, behave very badly; and it seems as if they desire to push the Christians to revolt, because, in such a case, the Turks hope to pillage the property of the Christians.

The Christians here have requested me to write and inform you of this state of things,

and to beg you will be so kind to send here from time to time an English man-of-war, in order to depress by his appearance here the fanaticism of the Turks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) L. A. CALOCHERINO.

No. 506.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 19. Political.)

Canea, Crete, May 5, 1877.

My Lord,

A STRANGE and unreasonable alarm has the last few days seized the inhabitants of this town, owing to the rumour that a Russian fleet had passed Gibraltar on its way to bombard Canea. My Austrian colleague, by his injudicious conduct on this occasion, has converted the alarm into a panic. He waited on the Governor-General, and learning from him that resistance would be made in case of an attack, he sent for the few Austrian subjects resident here and bluntly told them that in view of the expected attack he could not guarantee their safety. He telegraphed at the same time for two Austrian men-of-war, and ordered boxes to be made for the Consular archives, preparatory to their being conveyed to a place of safety. These proceedings of my colleague, who it is naturally supposed would not have acted thus without good information, have struck terror into the citizens of Canea, and the French subjects, yielding to the prevalent alarm, petitioned their Acting Consul, a Levantine from Smyrna, to telegraph for a French ship-of-war, which he incontinently did. Maltese subjects, catching the contagion of fear, are imploring me to afford them efficient protection; but I assure them there is not the slightest ground for alarm, as I know for a fact that the Russian fleet is thousands of miles from the Mediterranean, and that long before it could arrive here means would be taken to insure their safety. I believe I am right in stating that the only ground for these absurd proceedings is a telegram that appeared in the Constantinople paper, "Phare du Bosphore," to the effect that a Russian squadron had been seen to pass Gibraltar.

Simultaneously with the spread of these disquieting rumours, a Turkish engineer officer from Constantinople has appeared on the scene charged with the mission of putting the fortifications in a state of defence. Steps are to be taken for razing to the ground all buildings within a certain radius of the old Venetian fortifications which surround the maritime towns of Crete, and for removing the lightning conductors from the large powder magazines situated within the walls; but though the Pasha whom I questioned on the subject tells me that these steps are yet premature, one building on the ramparts has already been demolished. These proceedings naturally heighten the terror felt by all classes of society, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, and foreigners feeling themselves threatened by a common calamity.

The issuing of the Queen's Proclamation of Neutrality, which any one at all conversant with recent events might have had anticipated, was a great surprise for the Mussulman inhabitants, who clung tenaciously to the belief that England would never forsake them. This happening at the moment when there is a talk of a descent of a Russian squadron has not tended to augment their confidence.

While danger is thus looked for from abroad, the aspect of affairs at home is not more encouraging. Several Ottoman functionaries of both communities have petitioned the Government for the payment of some of their arrears of salary, but his Excellency has been forced to meet their demand with a refusal, and to confess that not only is the Treasury empty of coin, but even of paper money. The current revenue of the island is swallowed up in feeding the regular and irregular troops.

The sittings of the Commercial Tribunal, the elections of the members of which I reported in my despatch No. 15 of the 18th ultimo, have been brought to a premature end by the resignation of the Judges and President in a body. They had decreed that a certain sum in litigation was payable in cash, but the Vali refused to confirm the sentence as not being in conformity with the late Vizirial order, which enjoins that all debts are henceforth payable in Caïmé. The members of the Court being merchants, the new law is opposed to their interests no less than to their sense of justice, and hence their resignation.

Over and above these disquieting influences, an additional cause of disturbance is imminent in the presence of the General Assembly, which is to begin its annual sittings on the 10th instant, and which are likely to be more stormy than any that have yet been held.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—While I write an Austrian ironclad has put in at Suda Bay from Smyrna, in response to the appeal made by the Austrian Consul. Companies of soldiers are busy working on the ramparts of the town to prepare them for the reception of Krupp cannon, which are said to be expected from Constantinople, and the enthusiasm is so great that numbers of Mussulmans, including many of the principal Beys are vying with the troops in their patriotic task. Other soldiers are engaged in transporting gunpowder from one magazine to another placed in a less exposed situation. The means of offence possessed by the garrison consist of about twenty Paixhan guns and a few mortars.

T. B. S.

No. 507.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 20. Political.)

Canea, Crete, May 7, 1877.

My Lord,

AS I had the honour of stating in my last despatch, the Session of the General Assembly is to open on the 10th instant. For a time it was thought that the deputies were decided to limit their action to a reiteration of their demand made last year for a modification of the Organic Law; but a more ambitious scheme seems now to be preparing.

I have learned from an indirect source that the Christian moiety of the Assembly intend to demand that Crete be erected into a Principality. If last year's demands were inadmissible, still less so is this as stated in its naked form; and it would inevitably lead to a breaking up of the Assembly. Samih Pasha, as if anticipating an abrupt termination of the sittings, has this morning posted two companies of soldiers at a place called Boutzanaria, some four miles from the town, where malcontents are wont to assemble in times of disturbance, and where were held the popular meetings that ushered in the last insurrection.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 508.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 14. Political.)

Aleppo, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch to Mr. Layard, reporting on disturbances which have occurred at Mersyna, but without loss of life.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 508.

Consul Skene to Mr. Layard.

Aleppo, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 29th ultimo upwards of 200 Musulmans cut down the flagstaff of the Russian Vice-Consulate at Mersyna, shouting curses and menaces against all Christians. They then proceeded to the Christian burial-ground, where they destroyed some monuments and crosses. The Governor-General of Adana arrived next day with a strong detachment of police, and had some of the rioters arrested. No further acts of violence took place after his arrival at Mersyna.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 509.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 53. Political.)
Belgrade, May 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that in reply to a telegram just received from Mr. Layard, instructing me to let him know whether there was any truth in a report that Servian forces were being concentrated on the Turkish frontier, I sent him the following telegram:—

"Servian Minister for Foreign Affairs assures me that there is no truth in the report that troops are being concentrated on the frontier—only a corps of observation."

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 510.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 129. Political.)
Cairo, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Chamber of Delegates having found half a million of money to pay for sending assistance to Turkey, the Government have at length decided to dispatch about 10,000 troops to Constantinople within a short time under the convoy of three Turkish men-of-war. The Egyptian contingent in Turkey will thus amount to about 18,000 men, and they will be commanded by Prince Hassan, the Viceroy's son.

I have failed to observe that the demand for this assistance has evoked any great enthusiasm or sympathy here; the Khedive and his Government seem to have been simply guided in what they have done by a sense of their obligations towards the Porte, which they have sought to conciliate with a desire to gain the good opinion of Europe by keeping strict faith with their creditors. His Highness's decision has been taken spontaneously, as latterly no pressure has been put upon him, and my French colleague tells me that he has received instructions from his Government not to interfere at all in political questions, but to confine his representations to advising the Khedive to allow nothing to interfere with the faithful observance of his financial engagements.

I fancy that your Lordship must have taken some effectual steps to check the absurd stories that have been current here, in spite of all I could say, regarding the intentions of England upon Egypt, for I observe a marked change for the better in this respect, owing, I am glad to say, in a great measure to the flat contradiction now given to these rumours by my French colleague.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—Cherif Pasha further informs me that while private Russian subjects will be allowed to remain in Egypt under the protection of the German Consul-General, the orders of the Porte are, that this concession is not intended to extend to Russian subjects who have held an official position of any kind, who must be expelled from the country immediately.

C. V.

No. 511.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 21.)

(No. 25.)
Budapest, May 7, 1877.

Sir,

YESTERDAY the Minister of Justice replied to an interpellation of M. Polit respecting the delay in trying M. Miletics and the other Omladinists, that there had been no interruption since the arrest nine months ago, in the proceedings, but that from the extent of the necessary inquiries, the dispersion of the witnesses in Servia and elsewhere, and the increasing number of inculpated persons, it had not yet been possible to begin the

trial; all the proceedings were those of a criminal trial, and not merely preventive measures by the Government.

M. Polit was dissatisfied with this answer, and concluded his remarks by saying that it was a great mistake to see any reason of State in the detention of M. Miletics, for the Eastern question had now taken such dimensions that neither the Serbs nor the Hungarians could do anything, and that the latter would do well to look up their history wherein many a Miletics appears, and to ponder the Latin proverb, "Hodie mihi, cras tibi."

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 512.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 21.)

(No. 26.)
Budapest, May 9, 1877.

Sir,

THE drift of the articles on the Eastern question in the "Pester Lloyd" attributed to Mr. Falk—is that the Austrian arms are, as a matter of course, not to be used against Turkey, nor are they to be employed to cover the flank of Russia, or "to shoot at sparrows" as Count Andrassy called a war against Servia, or to rob in companionship with Russia, but they are to be wielded for the interests of the Empire. Nevertheless the attitude of Roumania, and the action of Servia might do more to provoke an early movement on the part of Austria than the action of the giant Russia.

In fact the commercial interests of the Empire, and especially of Hungary, are seriously threatened by hostilities on the Danube, and a declaration of independence by Roumania, and a resumption of hostilities by Servia, would considerably increase the excitement amongst the Hungarians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 513.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 21.)

(No. 29.)
Budapest, May 11, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 23 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that M. Tisza, in reply to the inquiry of M. Somsics as to the navigation of the Danube, stated on the 9th instant to the Diet that the Treaties do not declare its neutrality, but merely its free navigation; that only the International Danube Commission and its appurtenances are declared to be neutral; that, therefore, no neutral Power can complain of the belligerents interfering from necessary cause of war with its navigation, but that, in view of the great interests involved, Austria-Hungary would insist upon the free navigation being restored as soon as the present necessity had passed away, and would protest against any measure which might endanger in the future its navigation. A communication in this sense had been already made at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople in the hope that a satisfactory answer would be received, but what the Government might do later would depend upon circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 514.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 21.)

(No. 30. Confidential.)
Budapest, May 13, 1877.

Sir,

FROM conversations with Hungarian Cabinet Ministers I gather that their view of the Imperial policy in respect of the Oriental question is that Austria-Hungary will for the present remain neutral, await the progress of the war between Russia and Turkey,

and then, when her interests are directly menaced, will occupy Bosnia and Servia against Russia, and will, in fact, be found there not in the interest of Turkey, but in her own interests, when, as was said to me, "England will be found at Constantinople for similar reasons." They believe that no action will be taken to give effect to an understanding with Russia, because they disbelieve that any such an understanding exists, and they would only acquiesce with reluctance in any occupation, with or without subsequent annexation of those provinces.

From other sources I learn that Count Andrassy's language to the Hungarian Ministers is that patience is now the best policy, that affairs must ripen in Germany before Austria-Hungary moves, and that, although it is not Prince Bismarck's policy, the Emperor William would not move against Russia, but would rather mobilize on the Austrian frontier, if she moved.

The fact seems to be that the Hungarian Ministers are extremely reticent, and probably know very little more than they say. They speak from impressions and perhaps hopes, rather than from actual knowledge; and Count Andrassy tests their trust in him by not revealing his policy, whilst M. Tisza, fond good man, thinks that at the last moment he can throw the Hungarian influence into the scale and prevent Count Andrassy from acquiescing in a policy of annexation. He makes the common and often fatal mistake of carrying into foreign policy the good rule of internal policy—to reserve till the eleventh hour the influence of Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 515.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 200. Confidential.) *Berlin, May 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF arrived in Berlin the night before last, after paying a visit to Prince Bismarck at Friedrichsruhe, near Hamburgh. His Excellency has had an audience of the Emperor William and proceeds to-morrow morning to St. Petersburgh.

Count Schouvaloff told me that he had communicated your Lordship's note of the 6th instant, addressed to himself, to Prince Bismarck, confidentially, and that the Prince had been very favourably impressed by it.

I have since heard that the note has produced a similar impression on the other members of the German Government in Berlin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 516.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 206. Most Confidential.) *Berlin, May 18, 1877.*

My Lord,

SINCE Count Schouvaloff's passage through Berlin, your Lordship's note of the 6th instant to his Excellency has been talked about in diplomatic circles here, as well as in the Vienna press, but without any very distinct knowledge of its contents.

On Prince Bismarck, to whom Count Schouvaloff gave it, and on the German Government generally, it made a favourable impression, as I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 200, Confidential, of the 15th instant.

I have now been very confidentially informed that the Emperor had also derived a favourable impression of the note from his conversation with Count Schouvaloff, but that His Majesty, while agreeing that the interests of England and Russia would not come into collision at Constantinople, in Egypt, or in the Gulf of Persia, had observed that he must still reserve his opinion in regard to the navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, because it appeared to him that other Powers besides England might have a word to say on the subject.

Whether His Majesty was expressing a personal opinion or whether he was repeating that of his Chancellor, I have not yet been able to find out.

When I was at Versailles in 1870, I remember hearing Prince Bismarck say that as

No. 515*.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 205. Secret.) *Berlin, May 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

HERR VON BULOW told me he had a question he very much wished to ask me privately, if I could answer it privately, for his own personal information, because he was particularly anxious that it should go no further, and that it should have no official character or consequences.

It was this: The Turkish Government sought to excuse the difficulties they had thrown in the way of the German protectorate of Russian subjects and interests in Turkey during the war, by insinuating that they were acting under the dictation of Mr. Layard, whom they represent as hostile to and always warning them against the German Government.

Herr von Bülow said the insinuation appeared so unfounded and so contrary to Count Münster's and Count Hatzfeldt's opinion that he could not account for it, and the less so since Mr. Layard had proved himself such a true friend to, and supporter of, German interests, in concert with Count Hatzfeldt, who never ceased to say how much he was indebted to Mr. Layard for his assistance and friendship at Madrid.

I said it was also quite contrary to Mr. Layard's own reports to your Lordship of his language to the Porte, and that I could answer for it that Mr. Layard, with whom I was intimately acquainted, would always wish to act at Constantinople as he had acted in Madrid, in concert and harmony with Germany and his German colleague.

Herr von Bülow thanked me for relieving him of a nightmare, and begged I would allow the subject and question to drop into oblivion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 516*.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 21.)

(No. 415.) *Paris, May* 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a letter dated yesterday, which I have received this afternoon from M. Callimaki Catargi.

He states in it that he is directed by the Roumanian Government to inform the British Government of the measures which it has taken relative to the navigation of neutral vessels on the Lower Danube.

The Roumanian Government has, it appears, prohibited navigation on the river, and it declares that it will not be responsible for any losses occasioned thereby.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 516*.

M. Catargi to Lord Lyons.

Paris, le 19 Mai, 1877.

My Lord,

LE Gouvernement Princier m'a chargé, par un télégramme en date d'hier, de porter à la connaissance du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique les mesures que les circonstances actuelles l'ont obligé de prendre relativement à la navigation des bâtiments neutres dans le Bas-Danube.

La Sublime Porte, par des instructions données au Serdar-Ekrem, Abdul Kerim, le $\frac{13}{25}$ Avril dernier, a établi que les règles concernant le commerce des neutres en mer ne pouvaient pas recevoir leur application sur le Danube, et que par suite le Commandant-en-chef des forces Ottomanes était libre de prendre telle mesure qu'il croirait convenable dans l'intérêt des opérations militaires.

Le Gouvernement Princier a vu avec regret ces dispositions, qui, à son avis, sont contraires à la liberté du commerce sur le Danube, liberté consacrée* internationaux, néanmoins il lui est impossible, en présence de l'état de guerre que la Turquie a créé par la dévastation des ponts Roumains et la capture des navires et des cargaisons qui s'y trouvaient, de ne pas se placer sur le même terrain que la Sublime Porte et de ne pas user du droit de défense, en empêchant le ravitaillement des places Turques par les bâtiments sous pavillon neutre.

Il vient en conséquence d'interdire la navigation sur le Danube à partir du point de Groïdn, et il déclare qu'en aucun cas il ne sera responsable des pertes que le chargeur, ou propriétaire de cargaisons, ou tous autres intéressés pourraient éprouver du fait des empêchements causés par les forces Roumaines à la navigation du Bas-Danube, ces empêchements résultant d'une nécessité de guerre.

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser cette communication, Milord, avec prière de la transmettre à votre Gouvernement, afin qu'il puisse au besoin mettre en garde les armateurs et chargeurs Anglais contre les dangers auxquels seraient exposés leurs navires et leurs équipages en contrevenant aux dispositions qui précèdent.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) N. CALLIMAKI CATARGI.

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* Query omission.

far as Germany was concerned there could be no objection to the free navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, for ships of war, if agreed to between Russia and the Porte, in which case he would claim a coaling station in the Black Sea for the German navy.

Prince Bismarck may have altered his opinion since then, for he was not so well disposed towards England seven years ago as he is now.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 517.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 21.)

(No. 453. Confidential.)

Vienna, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 164 of the 7th instant, transmitting to me the copy of a letter which you had addressed on the previous day to Count Schouvaloff, relative to the Eastern Question, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Prince Reuss spoke to me, on his way through Vienna, of what he called the five points which he understood would be insisted upon by Her Majesty's Government in any future territorial arrangements which might result from the present war between Russia and Turkey.

In consequence of your Lordship's telegram of the 10th instant, desiring me to restrict my communications on this subject to Count Andrassy, I could only ask Prince Reuss for information respecting it. He considered the future fate of Constantinople, and the safety of the Suez Canal, to be the points on which Her Majesty's Government were most interested; and he said that, with respect to these, from what he had reason to believe of the policy and intentions of Russia, there was no probability of any difficulties arising between her and Great Britain.

With regard to the free navigation of the Bosphorus, however, he expressed surprise that it should be considered by Her Majesty's Government to have an important influence on the interests of England,—an observation which had been also made to me some time previously by the German Ambassador.

I reminded him, therefore, that, before the Crimean war, Russia had always maintained a fleet of from sixteen to twenty ships of the line in the Black Sea, fully equipped and manned; and I said that, if a fleet of iron-clads of similar strength were to be again established there, with the passage of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles open to ships of war, no maritime Power in the Mediterranean, and more especially Great Britain, to whom that sea was the highway to India, could consider their interests secure while merely protected by such moderate naval forces as they would, under other circumstances, desire to maintain during a state of peace. Her Majesty's Government could not, therefore, I said, be considered unreasonable if they should object to any change in existing arrangements which would impose upon Great Britain the necessity of maintaining naval armaments, as costly and burdensome to the country as the military establishments which are now weighing so heavily on the population of all the Continental States of Europe.

From language held to me recently by the Italian Ambassador, his Government would probably also regard the free navigation of the straits as a concession which might easily be made to Russia; but, whether supported by other Powers or not, if this point has not been one of the principal causes of the war, I feel assured, if Russia is in a position to do so, she will insist on its being conceded to her in the Treaty of Peace, as I had frequent opportunities, during my residence at St. Petersburgh, of becoming acquainted with the intense desire of the Russian Government and nation to obtain free access for their fleet into the Mediterranean,—their right to claim which being often urged by persons who disclaim any wish to see Constantinople included within the territories of the Empire.

As Prince Reuss, who had dined at the Palace previously to our conversation, said that the Emperor had expressed to him entire confidence in the declaration of the Emperor Alexander that he has no intention of endeavouring to obtain possession of Constantinople, I asked whether it was from His Majesty that he had obtained his information about the five points to which he had referred, but he assured me that this was not the case.

The nature, however, of your Lordship's observations to Count Schouvaloff seems now to be generally known here, as several persons have spoken to me of them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 518.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

Tehran, May 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram, received this morning, Colonel Nixon, on the 16th, telegraphed to me that the Prince had stated that his demand for the evacuation of Shalha was made with my assent, and I informed him at once that this was not the case.

The Prince has now at Mohamra, besides horse, 1,000 infantry, and more are expected; and as great ill-feeling exists between Turks and Persians there, I yesterday urged Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to order the Prince, by telegraph, not to attempt to take possession of the island by force. He said that the Prince had received no instructions to do so, but he would not engage to give fresh orders on the subject.

I promised to inquire of Her Majesty's Government whether any understanding had been come to at Constantinople with respect to the evacuation of the island and to let him know the result.

Communicated to the Viceroy.

No. 519.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

Belgrade, May 20, 1877, noon.

(Telegraphic.)

MORE than a fortnight ago considerable military activity was visible, here which has since partly abated. About the same time Prince Milan sent to Russian head-quarters a relative on a special mission, with a view to learn Russia's intentions concerning Servia, and to complain of Russian Representative at Belgrade. The latter has been recalled from his post since and was instructed by Prince Gortchakow to communicate to Prince Milan before his departure in a very decisive tone that the Imperial Government expects no co-operation from Servia, and recommends her to keep quiet. Notwithstanding such a discouragement, Prince Milan has sent the same relative again to the Grand Duke and it remains to be seen whether this second mission will have a different result.

On account of the incessant rain during five days some places are submerged. Danube again rising. Roads impracticable.

No. 520.

Major-General Stanton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

Munich, May 20, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

I AM informed on good authority that 4,000 stand of old pattern breech-loading rifles, which had been recently sold by the Bavarian Government, left Munich a few days since for Italy. I have reason to believe these arms were bought on Russian account, and imagine they are destined for Albania or Montenegro.

No. 521.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)

St. Petersburgh, May 21, 1877, 1 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW begged me to-day to inform your Lordship that Emperor fully appreciated the frankness of the exposition of the views of Her Majesty's Government contained in your letter of the 5th instant to Count Schouvaloff.

Same frankness would be evinced in the answer which was preparing, and of which Count Schouvaloff would be bearer.

His Highness said that he should keep it completely secret, and not even communicate it to Austria or Germany, and added that Count Schouvaloff would leave for London a few days after the Emperor's departure on the 2nd of June.

(Very Confidential.)

It appears to me that the object of Prince Gortchakow is to lure England by delay into maintaining a passive attitude until it will be too late to prevent occupation of Constantinople by Russia.

No. 522.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

Foreign Office, May 21, 1877, 2·40 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of 18th instant, Mr. Layard telegraphed on the 17th instant that he had been assured most positively by Persian Minister that no hostile measures would be taken by Persian troops now at Mohammerah, and that the question of the island in the Euphrates is settled for the present.

No. 523.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 21, 1877, 3 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

INDO-EUROPEAN Telegraph Company state that their land-line has been interrupted between Adler and Suchum Kaleh by operations of Turkish fleet, and that their mechanicians have not been able to approach the stations to repair damages. Call attention of Turkish Government with reference to instructions reported to have been issued in your telegram of the 11th May.

No. 524.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

Foreign Office, May 21, 1877, 4·50 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

AUSTRIAN Government have communicated to Sir A. Buchanan despatch of May 6 to their Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople respecting free navigation of the Danube. I have asked that Austrian Representative may be instructed to communicate it to you, and you will address a representation to the Government to which you are accredited, similar to that which the Austrian Representative has been instructed to make.

No 525.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your despatch No. 450 of the 14th instant, ask Austrian Government to be good enough to instruct their Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople by telegraph to communicate to Her Majesty's Representative copy of Austrian despatch of 6th instant, respecting free navigation of the Danube. Her Majesty's Representatives have been instructed to address representations to Russian and Turkish Governments similar to those which the Austrian Representatives have been directed to make.

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* A similar telegram was addressed to Mr. Layard.

No. 526.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 181.) *Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE telegraphed to-day to your Excellency requesting you to ask that instructions may be sent by telegraph to the Austro-Hungarian Representatives at Constantinople and St. Petersburgh, directing them to communicate to their British colleagues the despatch addressed to them on the 6th instant, copy of which was inclosed in your No. 150 of the 14th instant, recording the protest of Austria-Hungary against any permanent interruption of the freedom of the navigation of the Danube arising from the operations of the belligerents. I have at the same time informed you that Her Majesty's Representatives will be directed to make a similar representation both to the Russian and Turkish Governments.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 527.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(No. 12.) *Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE had under consideration, in communication with the Law Officers of the Crown, the three letters addressed to you by the Russian Consul at Galatz, on the 27th and 30th of April and 4th of May, with regard to the suspension of the navigation of the Danube, by order of the Russian military authorities, and I am advised that the reasons given by M. Romanenko in his letter of May 4th, to the effect that the measure in question had been taken solely with a strategical object, justify the suspension of the navigation of the Danube in the manner and to the extent notified.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 528.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(No. 35.) *Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.*

Sir,

IN your telegram of the 18th instant, you state that you promised the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs that you would inquire of Her Majesty's Government whether any understanding had been come to at Constantinople respecting the Island of Shalka; and, in reply, I have to inform you that, under date of the 17th instant, Mr. Layard stated that the Persian Minister at Constantinople had assured him in the most positive manner that no hostile movement would be undertaken by the Persian troops now stationed at Mohammerah, and that the question of the island in the Euphrates was settled for the present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 529.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 13. Political.) *Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 38, Political, of the 1st instant, reporting the steps which you have taken in consequence of a telegram received from Mr. Monson, stating that a Koutchi shepherd had been decapitated by the Turks near Podgoritza, and that the Prince of Montenegro threatened reprisals if orders were not promptly issued by the Turkish Commander-in-chief for the prevention of such outrages; and, in reply, I have to state to you that I approve the letter which, in the absence of Mr. Monson from Cettigné, you addressed to the Prince's Secretary, M. Duby, informing him of the substance

of the reply which you had received from Ali Saib Pasha, and expressing the hope that the Prince would not resort to reprisals.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 530.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Holmes.

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 21, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 27, Political, of the 26th ultimo, and I have to state to you that I approve the instructions which you addressed to Mr. Vice-Consul Freeman, directing him to proceed to Glamosh and Otchievo, and to inquire into and report on certain outrages which are stated to have occurred at those places.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 531.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 19.)

My Lord,

Tunis, May 15, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 17 and 18 of the 7th and 8th of May, on the subject of the contingent of troops which the Porte has requested the Bey of Tunis to furnish, I have the honour to submit herewith inclosed a translation of His Highness' reply to the Grand Vizier, setting forth the reasons which put it out of his power to comply with the Sultan's requisition.

These reasons relate to the utter penury of the Tunisian Treasury, to the causes which have produced it, and which actually render it necessary to have recourse to a temporary loan to enable the Government to pay the coupon due on the 1st of July next.

Notwithstanding, however, these financial difficulties, a voluntary subscription has been again authorized and opened by the Bey in aid of the Turkish armies.

I have deemed it useful, in order to obviate any misconstruction being put upon the Bey's inability to furnish his contingent, to transmit copies of the despatches I have ventured to address to your Lordship on the subject to Her Majesty's Representative at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Inclosure in No. 531.

The Bey of Tunis to the Grand Vizier.

(Traduction.)

Le 15 Rabi Ettani, 1294.

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception à votre Altesse de la lettre qui accompagnait le Hatt Impérial, par laquelle votre Altesse me recommende de venir en aide à la Sublime Porte dans les circonstances actuelles, et j'ai accueilli ces écrits avec tout le respect qui leur est dû.

Ce concours qui m'est aujourd'hui recommendé aurait comblé tous mes vœux si les moyens d'y parvenir m'avaient été permis la dernière fois, car, si cela m'avait été possible, et sans les difficultés qui ont paralysé ma volonté, j'aurais concouru à cette œuvre par tous les moyens en mon pouvoir, et je ne me serais pas limité au seul envoi qui a été effectué.

J'avais, alors, pris les mesures les plus capables de me faire atteindre, autant que mes moyens et les circonstances le permettaient, le but proposé.

J'ai adressé, dans ce sens, à Sa Majesté le Sultan, la lettre que votre Altesse recevra sous ce pli. Néanmoins, comme il est de toute importance que mes excuses soient développées à celui qui connaît les situations véritables, ainsi que la sincérité de mes intentions, je désire porter à la connaissance de votre Altesse quelques unes des causes qui m'ont obligé, une première fois déjà, à me limiter aux seuls subsides que j'ai envoyés, et qui sont ma véritable justification devant Dieu et devant le siége du Kalifat, espérant que

votre Altesse voudra bien les développer au Commandeur des croyants de la manière que votre Altesse jugera la plus efficace pour faire agréer mes excuses.

Votre Altesse doit donc ne pas ignorer que la Régence entretient un nombre très-restreint de soldats, à cause de la pénurie du Trésor et de la crise financière qui pèse sur le pays et qui va toujours en s'aggravant. Cette situation est de notoriété publique et elle a même influé sur les conditions économiques de toute la population.

Malgré cette fâcheuse situation, je m'efforcerai de contribuer à l'assistance qui m'est demandée, par un envoi de subsides, en remplacement d'un contingent militaire impossible à fournir, autant que les conditions du pays me le permettront.

J'ai déjà pris les mesures nécessaires à cet effet, et je prie Dieu de couronner mes efforts de succès.

Aussitôt que les résultats de ces efforts me seront connus je m'empresserai d'en tenir informée votre Altesse.

Ecrit, &c.,

(L.S.) MOHAMMED ESSADOK.

No. 532.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 22.*)

Constantinople, le 20 Mai, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

NOUS recevons journellement du Gouvernement Persan des assurances d'amitié qui sembleraient d'autant plus dignes de foi, qu'elles nous sont transmises sous la forme la plus officielle, et qu'elles correspondent aux intérêts les plus essentiels de la Perse elle-même. Cependant, des nouvelles de préparatifs militaires qu'il n'est pas permis de mettre en doute non plus, nous arrivent en même temps, et les explications qu'on nous en donne ne sont pas de nature à calmer toute inquiétude, si bien que, sans vouloir suspecter les bonnes dispositions qu'on nous témoigne, nous ne pouvons ne pas nous demander quel est le but réel des préparatifs militaires qui se font actuellement en Perse.

Je vous prie d'entretenir confidentiellement Lord Derby de cette situation, et de lui faire apprécier l'intérêt qu'il y aurait, selon nous, à obtenir du Gouvernement Persan une déclaration de neutralité formelle à l'exemple de toutes les autres Puissances. Cette déclaration empêcherait la Russie de tenir de la Perse les ressources qu'elle en tire actuellement; elle nous fournirait, en outre, une garantie de plus de ses intentions pacifiques, car nous pensons que, si la Perse était amenée à déclarer sa neutralité sous l'inspiration du Gouvernement Anglais, sa neutralité pourrait avoir une valeur réelle.

No. 533.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(No. 417.) *Paris, May 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

I RECITED this morning to M. de Lesseps, the contents of your Lordship's despatch No. 290 of the 16th instant, containing the answer of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of his proposal for the neutralization of the Suez Canal by an International Convention.

M. de Lesseps expressed great satisfaction with the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government. He said that the communications made by Her Majesty's Government to the Russian Government, to the Porte, and to the Khedive, afforded a much more effectual security to the Canal than could have been obtained by the arrangement he had proposed, and that the course taken by Her Majesty's Government appeared to him to be in all respects preferable to that which he had suggested.

He begged me to convey his hearty thanks to your Lordship.

I mentioned to him that I had made the Duc Decazes acquainted with the contents of your Lordship's despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 534.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Rustchuk, May 21, 1877.*

THE Government journal here, speaking to the Mussulmans of the war, calls it the war of religion waged by the Sultan against the unbelievers.

Nothing else important.

No. 535.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 21, 1877.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has just announced that he considers Roumania independent, and is at war with the Porte.

No. 536.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 21, 1877, 2·20 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum, dated yesterday:—

"Russians captured Ardahan yesterday morning. Garrison supposed to have fled after the assault reported in my last telegram. Further details to-morrow. The General[a] reached head-quarters yesterday."

No. 537.

Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May 21, 1877.*

PERSIAN Shahzadah at Mohammerah constructing four forts, two on Shat el Arab and two at mouth of Karoon River. There is an assemblage of troops going on at Kermanshah and Sevendej, in Persia; object unknown.

No. 538.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, May 22, 1877.*

I UNDERSTAND that Count Andrassy considers the Roumanian declaration of independence as an act which is provisionally unimportant, as its recognition will eventually depend on the decision of the Powers, but that he is in some doubt as to the right of the Principality to declare war and to be acknowledged as a belligerent.

No. 539.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, May 22, 1877.*

INSTRUCTIONS, in accordance with your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, will be forwarded to-day to the Austrian Ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople.

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[a] *i.e.*, Sir Arnold Kemball.

No. 540.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 22, 1877, 4·50 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

HER Majesty's Government have learnt with surprise and dissatisfaction from your telegram the sudden withdrawal of the consent previously given for British tugs and lighters on the Danube to pass into Austrian waters.

Press on the Porte the immediate reconsideration of this question.

No. 541.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

Foreign Office, May 22, 1877.

(No. 189.)

My Lord,

I APPROVE the language used by your Excellency to Herr von Bülow, as reported in your despatch No. 205, marked Secret, of the 17th instant, in contradiction of the totally unfounded report that the Turkish Government had been encouraged by Mr. Layard to throw difficulties in the way of the German Protectorate of Russian subjects in Turkey during the war.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 542.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.[*]

Foreign Office, May 22, 1877.

(No. 202.)

My Lord,

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna,† forwarding a copy of the instructions which Count Andrassy has addressed to the Austrian Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople in regard to the interruption of the navigation of the Danube in consequence of the military operations of Russia and Turkey; and I have to instruct your Excellency to address a representation to the Russian Government similar to that which the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires has been instructed to make.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 543.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 22, 1877.

(No. 138.)

Sir,

MUSURUS PASHA called upon me to-day and read me a telegram which he had received from the Porte relative to the apprehensions entertained at Constantinople as to the intentions of the Persian Government in consequence of the military preparations which they were reported to be making. Repeated assurances of friendship had been received from them in the most official form, but the Turkish Government was anxious to have a formal declaration of the neutrality of Persia, and hoped that Her Majesty's Government would assist them in obtaining it.

I said that we had used our best efforts to induce the Persian Government to maintain a neutral attitude in the present war; but with regard to the question of obtaining from them a declaration of neutrality, I did not see that, considering the Porte were stated to be already receiving continual assurances of friendship from the Persian Government, their position would be much improved by a further declaration of the same kind.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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[*] A similar despatch was addressed to Mr. Layard.

† No. .

No. 544.

Prince Gortchakow to M. de Novikow.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, May 23.)

St. Pétersbourg, le 30 Avril, 1877.

NOUS venons de recevoir de M. l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche-Hongrie communication d'une dépêche de M. le Comte Andrassy relative à la liberté de la navigation du Danube.

J'en joins ci-près une copie.

Votre Excellence est invité, d'ordre de Sa Majesté l'Empereur, à déclarer de la manière la plus formelle à M. le Comte Andrassy que le Cabinet Impérial ne considère l'interruption de la navigation du Danube que comme un incident de fait temporaire, rendu inévitable par l'état de guerre actuel, mais qui ne préjudicie en rien pour l'avenir le principe de la libre navigation du fleuve; que le Cabinet Impérial fera tout ce qui est possible pour restreindre les entraves momentanées apportées à la navigation, quant à l'étendue et à la durée, dans les plus strictes limites commandées par les nécessités de guerre; et enfin, que le Cabinet Impérial s'engage à se mettre d'accord avec le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois pour rétablir la liberté du fleuve aussitôt que faire se pourra.

Recevez, &c.

No. 545.

Count Andrassy to the Barons Langenau and Herbert.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, May 23.)

Vienne, le 6 Mai, 1877.

EN présence de la guerre qui vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie, nous avons dû nous préoccuper de la situation faite à notre commerce et à notre navigation par les opérations militaires qui sont à la veille de se dérouler sur les bords du Bas-Danube.

L'Article 109 de l'Acte final du Congrès de Vienne de 1815 a décidé, en thèse générale, que la navigation des rivières séparant ou traversant plusieurs Etats sera entièrement libre et ne pourra, sous le rapport du commerce, et sauf les règlements de police, être interdite à personne. Cette dispositition a été confirmée, en ce qui concerne le Danube, par l'Article XV du Traité de Paris de 1856. Aux termes de ces stipulations, il ne peut être apporté aucun obstacle, quel qu'il soit, à la libre navigation du Danube.

Les transactions internationales que je viens de rappeler n'impliquent point, il est vrai, la neutralité absolue de la voie fluviale. En dehors des ouvrages et établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube, ainsi que du personnel de cette Commission, déclarés neutres par l'Article 21 de l'Acte Public de 1865, la liberté de navigation garantie sur le Danube, nous sommes obligés d'en convenir, ne saurait empêcher que le cours inférieur du fleuve, de même que ses deux rives ne puissent être enveloppés dans la lutte qui vient de s'ouvrir.

Les devoirs qui découlent de l'attitude de neutralité que nous avons jugé à propos d'adopter en face du conflit actuel, nous interdisent de faire prévaloir le droit de libre navigation sur les mesures qui pourraient être prises par les belligérants dans l'intérêt de leurs opérations militaires.

Mais tout en admettant que les incidents de la guerre puissent amener des entraves passagères pour la navigation Danubienne, nous nous reconnaissons le devoir de réserver, dès à présent de la manière la plus formelle, auprès des Puissances belligérantes, le principe de la liberté de cette navigation du Danube que l'Autriche-Hongrie est intéressée en première ligne à voir maintenue.

Vous êtes donc chargé, M. le Baron, de porter officiellement à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial les observations qui précèdent. Vous voudrez bien ajouter que, si nous consentons à nous résigner aux inconvénients inséparables de l'état de guerre sur la ligne du Danube, il est bien entendu que cette situation exceptionnelle ne pourra en aucune façon être invoquée comme un précédent au préjudice de la liberté de navigation; que les mesures restrictives de cette liberté qui seraient rendues indispensables par les exigences de la guerre se régleront sur les principes internationaux; que ces restrictions ne dépasseront pas les limites tracées par la nécessité la plus impérieuse et qu'aussitôt que le cours des opérations de la guerre le permettra, les Puissances belligérantes s'entendront avec nous pour rétablir la liberté de la navigation sur le Bas-Danube.

Vous voudrez bien en outre, M. le Baron, prier le Gouvernement Impérial de nous faire parvenir le plut tôt possible une déclaration conforme à ces indications.

Recevez, &c.

No. 546.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 23.*)

(No. 14. Political.) *Bosna Serai, May 8, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the greatest possible difficulty is felt with regard to the case of the refugees who are returning from Servia. The Mussulman landowners have no seeds to give for the cultivation of their properties or the employment of the returning peasants, and the Turkish Government no money at all, its resources being required for military purposes. An immense amount of irremediable distress seems, therefore, inevitable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 547.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 23.*)

(No. 85. Political.) *Bucharest, May 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Resolution passed by the Moldo-Wallachian Senate the day before yesterday is not without some significance with regard to the present as well as the future.

The debate in the Chamber, which I mentioned to your Lordship by telegraph, took a more accentuated form than that in the Senate.

In both Chambers M. Kogalniceano stated that the Porte, by her Circular to the Powers, and by her aggressive acts against this country, had brought about a state of war between the Ottoman Empire and Roumania; that Roumania must therefore carry on a defensive war, and that the Porte had virtually proclaimed her divorce with these Principalities.

In the Lower Chamber M. Bratiano spoke to the effect that a defensive war must, and may be, sometimes, for strategical reasons, carried on to the enemy's territory, thus leaving a loophole for an aggressive policy, should circumstances render it possible.

The whole tone of the Senate was far more sober than that of the Chamber; in the former there was continual reference to the Treaty of Paris and the Guaranteeing Powers, the result of which is the accompanying Resolution.

It is difficult to say what is the exact and final cause which has at the last moment induced this hesitation on the part of M. Bratiano to proclaim Roumanian independence.

There is no doubt that, had the measure been brought before the Chamber, there would have been a compact minority of forty members who would have voted, and for the most part spoken, against such a policy; while, in the face of such a demonstration in the Lower Chamber, the Senate would have offered a conspicuous, although, perhaps, not a successful resistance.

I apprehend, also, that there was no encouragement whatever from St. Petersburgh. Independence in Roumania would have been followed by a similar declaration in Servia; and then Austria must have been called upon to express an opinion, if not to act.

I have several times expressed to your Lordship that the Government of Prince Charles has all along received no encouragement from Russia, and Baron Stuart's language to me, no later than Saturday, confirms me in this view.

Notwithstanding the Convention and the advances of this Cabinet, the relations between the Russian and Roumanian authorities are far from being of a comfortable nature.

The Roumanians complain that the Russians are exacting and arrogant, while the Russians allege that the Roumanian authorities are obstructive, unaccommodating, and unreliable, all of which indicates a marked absence of that cordiality which might have been expected were Russia disposed to avail herself of the independence of Roumania as a

political factor in the present struggle, and to profit by her offers, in a Russian sense, which have been flung at the feet of the Imperial Government with so much ostentation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 547.

Motion voted in the Senate, May 13, 1877.

(Translation.)

THE Senate entirely endorses the explanation given to the House by the Minister of Foreign Affairs; and, taking into consideration that Turkey, by her declarations and aggressive acts against Roumania, has severed the old bonds which united us to her, and has thus placed herself in a state of war with the Roumanian State. Considering the declaration of the Government, that Roumanian cannon was obliged to reply to the aggressions of Turkey. The Senate admits that a state of war is created to Roumania, solely by the Ottoman Government.

The Senate, therefore, approves the attitude of the Government in the face of Turkish provocation, and continuing to rely on the support of the Guaranteeing Powers, which, by the Treaty of Paris, took under their protection the political individuality of Roumania, feels all confidence that the Government will exert itself, and will take the necessary measures to defend our territory, and to assure the existence of the Roumanian State, so that, when peace shall be made, Roumania may have a political position well defined, and solid of itself.

Bucharest, May 13, 1877.

No. 548.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 23.*)

(No. 87. Political.) *Bucharest, May 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Grand Duke Nicholas passed a few hours in Bucharest to-day, to return the visit which was yesterday paid to His Imperial Highness by Prince Charles at the Russian head-quarters at Ploeschti.

It had been arranged for the Grand Duke to pass seven or eight days at Bucharest; His Imperial Highness was to have lived at the Russian Agency together with the Grand Duke Nicholaewitch, the Chief of the Staff, and the personal attendants; sixty rooms had been retained at the various hotels for the remainder of the staff.

The arrangement in question did not take place, owing to this Government raising objections to the Grand Duke bringing his escort, orderlies, &c., on the grounds that, under "the Convention," Bucharest is exempt from the passage or presence of Russian troops.

It was, of course, impossible for the Commander of a vast army to spend several days at Bucharest as a mere tourist, and not to be accompanied by the representatives of the great military departments, and to have what is requisite in the way of escort, orderlies, military attendants, &c.

M. Kogalniceano several days since repaired to the Russian head-quarters to endeavour to come to an understanding, but it is believed that the Grand Duke was altogether indisposed to relax or make any alteration in his decision.

Your Lordship will also note that Prince Charles paid the first visit, although the Grand Duke had some days since visited Roumanian territory, which would indicate that matters have not passed as smoothly as could have been wished.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 549.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, May* 23.)

(No. 38.)
Buda-Pest, May 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Hungarian Cabinet has issued orders respecting the principles on which commerce and navigation by Hungarian subjects shall be neutrally carried on during the war between Russia and Turkey, which orders are similar to those issued in Austria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 550.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 23.)

(No. 457. Confidential.)
Vienna, May 18, 1877.

My Lord,

COUNT ANDRASSY returned from Hungary yesterday, and I had an interview with him to-day, when I read to him the copy of your Lordship's letter to Count Schouvaloff of the 6th instant, which was transmitted to me in your despatch No. 164 of the 7th instant.

As I said that, though I had been instructed to acquaint him alone with its contents, they seemed already to have become known to a certain extent, he answered that they had evidently ceased to be a secret, as the press, even, has begun to discuss them.

With respect to the Suez Canal and Egypt, he observed that there was no probability of their being no danger, as Russia had not the means, even if so disposed, of interfering with them, nor does he believe that she contemplates the conquest of Constantinople.

He did not appear to be equally confident, however, that she might not claim, after a successful war, the free navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and as I observed that independently of the danger to which Constantinople might always be exposed by such a concession, it might also be objectionable to other Powers on economical grounds, he seemed to concur in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that the existing arrangements should not be disturbed. I did not, however, ask him to state his views upon it.

He referred to the map, and asked me whether I could explain what your Lordship meant in your observations respecting the Persian Gulf; and, in answering that you had only touched upon that question lightly, it was one, I said, which some persons might consider to be affected by Russian conquests in Armenia, as the possessor of that province could not fail to exercise an important influence over the whole country lying between it and the Gulf.

He did not seem to be satisfied with the wording of your Lordship's reference to the Emperor of Russia's promises respecting the possible occupation of Bulgaria, as he said, if Russia is to hold the province until she considers peace and the safety of the Christian population are secured, the period for its evacuation might be indefinitely postponed.

With respect to your Lordship's reservations generally, he appeared to fear that they might be interpreted by Russia as leaving her great latitude with respect to the settlement of other questions, and more freedom of action than is desirable.

He looks forward, however, anxiously to the arrival of a Memorandum on the question, which, according to a telegram from Count Beust, has been agreed upon in the Cabinet, and may be shortly expected at Vienna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 551.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 23.)

(No. 462. Confidential.)
Vienna, May 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED yesterday from your Lordship the copy of a telegram from Mr. Layard, reporting the anxiety of the Grand Vizier respecting Servian armaments, and the possibility of the Russian army finding it expedient to attempt the passage of the Danube from Turn-Severin.

It would appear, however, from a telegram which I received yesterday from Mr. Harriss-Gastrell, that there is no reason to fear the latter contingency, as M. Tisza, who came to Vienna for a day to see Count Andrassy, is said to have stated, on his return to Pesth on Friday last, that Austria-Hungary is prepared to occupy Belgrade if necessary; but that though Servia is mobilizing, it is not believed that she will move at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 552.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 23.)

(Telegraphic.)
Cairo, May 22, 1877, 6 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 13th and 14th instant, Porte has replied to the Viceroy that the right, on which it insists, to capture Russian merchantmen or men-of-war presenting themselves at Port Said or Suez for passage through the Suez Canal need not conflict with the right of neutrals.

Porte leaves to Egypt capture of merchantmen, but offers protection against Russian men-of-war.

Porte interprets Article 14 of the Concession not as neutralizing the Canal, but as granting equal right of passage to all merchantmen, subject always to the right of the Sovereign to capture enemies' vessels, as in the other ports of the Empire.

No. 553.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 23.)

(Telegraphic.)
Bucharest, May 23, 1877.

YESTERDAY, on the occasion of the eleventh anniversary of the accession of Prince Charles, the Senate and Chamber presented addresses, in which the independence of Roumania was as good as proclaimed. The Prince replied in the same sense. Torch-light demonstration in the evening before the Palace and the houses of the Minister President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 554.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 23.)

(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, May 23, 1877, 9·50 A.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, Austrian Ambassador informs me that the Porte has given him assurances that he considers satisfactory that freedom of navigation of Danube shall be respected for vessels ascending above junction of Timok.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 555.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.[a]

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877, 4·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram of 13th instant, Turkish Commander-in-chief on Danube raises objections to permitting English tugs and lighters to ascend into Austrian waters.

Mr. Layard instructed to express dissatisfaction, and press for reconsideration.

No. 556.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877, 6·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR despatch No. 421 of 8th instant referred to Admiralty.

Decision as to Captain Hobart having been taken by Her Majesty's Government with reference to neutrality of this country, and having been announced in the House of Commons, cannot be altered.

No. 556*.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 204. Confidential.)

My Lord,

THE Russian Chargé d'Affaires called upon me to-day at my request, and I informed him that in view of the condition of public opinion in this country it was very desirable that Her Majesty's Government should receive, with as little delay as possible, an answer to the note which I had addressed to Count Schouvaloff, before his departure from England, as to the limits within which this country would be able to maintain a passive attitude during the present war. I said that in the present state of affairs it seemed not unlikely that the Russian forces might have shortly some considerable military success, and that the prospect or possibility of an advance upon Constantinople would cause excitement and apprehension here, which it would be in the interest both of this Government and his own to allay. I wished him, therefore, to impress upon Prince Gortchakow the expediency of our receiving assurances from the Cabinet of St. Petersburgh of a nature to satisfy public feeling in England.

M. de Bartholomei said that he expected Count Schouvaloff to be back in England by the 6th or 7th of June, and he asked whether it would not be sufficient if his Excellency were the bearer of these assurances.

I said that I did not wish to fix any particular date, but I thought it was a matter of great importance that the answer should be received as soon as possible.

M. Bartholomei promised to forward the substance of my observations to St. Petersburgh by telegraph.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 557.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 184. Confidential.)

Sir,

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and, with reference to what is passing in Roumania, he stated that if the events of the war should lead to a declaration of independence on the part of that Principality, his Government would not, as at present advised, make any objection. The Austrian Government did, however, object to the neutralization of the Roumanian State under a European guarantee, since in their view this

[a] A similar telegram was sent to Consul Sanderson.

guarantee could only serve to secure impunity to Roumanian politicians in pursuing a course of agitation tending to the disturbance of neighbouring States.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 558.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 133.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 435 of May 10, referring to the alarm caused amongst the foreign population of Constantinople by the rumour that the Porte was about to proclaim a state of siege, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your having advised the Turkish Ministers not to have recourse to such a measure.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 559.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 135.)

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 414 of the 7th instant, respecting the steps which you have taken since your arrival at Constantinople to obtain the release of the Bulgarian prisoners who are confined on charges of complicity in the attempted insurrection of last year, and the punishment of the persons condemned for outrages on the Christians in Bulgaria; and I have to state to you that your proceedings, as reported in this despatch, are entirely approved.

Her Majesty's Government have learnt with satisfaction that your efforts have been so far successful, that an amnesty for the Bulgarian prisoners will be at once proclaimed, and that Achmet Agha and Metto Bektash will be transported to Benghazi, and they hope that the decision to perform these tardy acts of justice which has at last been taken by the Porte will be faithfully carried into effect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 560.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 141.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 423 of the 8th instant, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the representations which you made to the Porte on the subject of certain outrages which have recently been committed in the neighbourhood of Rustchuk and Hirsova.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 561.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Blunt.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

(No. 8.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 4, Political, of April 29, forwarding copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis relative to a recent outrage committed on a Christian in the neighbourhood of Obroukli, I have to request that you will convey to

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Mr. Dupuis my approval of the steps which he took to bring this matter to the knowledge of the Ottoman authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 562.

Sir J. Pauncefote to Mr. Farrer.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 3rd of August, 1870, relating to the instructions to be issued to British pilots with a view of preventing infractions of Her Majesty's neutrality during the Franco-German war, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to state to you, for the information of the Board of Trade, that after consultation with the Lords of the Admiralty and the Law Officers of the Crown, he considers it desirable that a similar notice should now be issued to be observed during the present war between Russia and Turkey.

The Law Officers have, however, suggested that some words should be added defining the nature of the danger out of which ships of war may be piloted, and I am to transmit to you, to be laid before the Board, a copy of the notice as amended by them with this view.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 563.

The Earl of Derby to Count Beust.

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

I RECEIVED on the 17th instant from Sir Andrew Buchanan copies of the identic despatches to Baron Langenau and Baron Herbert of the 6th of May, which your Excellency has done me the honour to communicate to me to-day.

As the views expressed in this despatch are in entire accordance with those of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the freedom of trade and navigation on the Danube, I instructed Her Majesty's Ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople to address to the Governments to which they are accredited a representation similar to that which the Austrian Representatives had been desired to make; and in order that there might be no delay in their doing so, I sent this instruction by telegraph, and requested Sir A. Buchanan to ask Count Andrassy to be good enough to authorize the Austrian Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople by telegraph to communicate the despatch of the 6th of May to their English colleagues.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 564.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 136. Political.)

Cairo, May 14, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 134 of yesterday, I have the honour to inclose a copy of the despatch addressed yesterday by the Khedive to the Grand Vizier, from which it appears that the idea of guarding the Suez Canal by torpedoes is abandoned by the Egyptian Government, and that its defence is to be intrusted to the Turkish navy, in case the Porte still maintains its decision to exclude all Russian vessels from the Canal after the gravity of this decision is pointed out to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 564.

His Highness the Khedive to the Grand Vizier.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir la dépêche de votre Altesse, en date du 10 de ce mois, au sujet du Canal de Suez, en réponse à ma communication du 6 du même mois.

La décision prise par le Gouvernement Impérial devant être rigoureusement exécutée, il a été reconnu en Conseil des Ministres, que j'ai spécialement convoquée à cet effet, que la fermeture du Canal aux bâtiments de guerre et de commerce Russes par des torpilles, comme nous le pensions auparavant, comme l'unique moyen dont nous puissions disposer, présente des inconvénients très-graves pour le mouvement commercial des navires neutres. En dehors des inquiétudes que les torpilles inspirent à la navigation et en paralysant le mouvement général, des accidents difficiles à prévoir peuvent arrêter le passage à travers le Canal. Ces engins de destruction en éclatant sous un navire ennemi, ou sous un navire ami par accident, pourraient fermer le Canal pour un laps de temps assez considérable, et faire souffrir sérieusement le commerce des neutres. D'ailleurs, la pose des torpilles pour empêcher le passage à l'ennemi, et leur enlèvement pour permettre le passage aux neutres, produiraient des retards préjudiciables au commerce des nations. Considérant ces inconvénients inévitables, le Conseil a pensé que la fermeture du Canal par des navires de guerre de la Marine Impériale, tel que l'indique la dépêche de votre Altesse, présente la solution la plus rationnelle, et remplit toutes les conditions de sécurité et de garantie voulue. Le nombre des bâtiments à envoyer dans le but sus-indiqué sera déterminée par l'Amirauté Impériale.

Quant aux mesures de police, de visites, et autres, conformément à la Convention de Paris de 1856, elles seront prises et exécutées par des officiers qui sont déjà nommés par le Gouvernement Egyptien.

Je dois ajouter la remarque qui m'a été faite par le Conseil, et sur laquelle je crois de mon devoir d'appeler l'attention de votre Altesse. L'Article 14 de la Concession 1856 à M. de Lesseps, ratifiée par le Gouvernement Impérial, contient ce qui suit :—

"Art. 14. Nous déclarons solennellement pour nous et nos successeurs, sous la réserve de la ratification de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, le Grand Canal Maritime de Suez à Peluse, et les ports en dépendants, ouverts à jamais, comme passage neutre, à tout navire de commerce, traversant d'une mer à l'autre, sans aucune distinction, exclusion, ni préférence de personnes ou de nationalités, moyennant le paiement des droits et l'exécution des règlements établis par la Compagnie Universelle Concessionnaire pour l'usage du dit Canal et dépendances."

Votre Altesse appréciera la portée et l'importance de cet article dans les circonstances actuelles, et j'attends ses instructions à ce sujet.

No. 565.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 24.)

(No. 42. Confidential.)

Buda-Pest, May 19, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, on good authority, that the Hungarian Ministers have reason to believe that, although Servia is already making military preparations, she will not try to move at present, and that, when Austria-Hungary moves, it will not be with Russia, but first to occupy Belgrade, and then, if necessary, to occupy Bosnia.

As a strong feeling had been evoked here by the attitude of Roumania and the agitation in Servia, and much pressure put upon the Hungarian Cabinet, this admission of a probable necessity to occupy Belgrade is looked upon as a concession to Hungarian feeling and interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 566.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, May 24.)

(No. 43.) *Buda-Pest, May 19, 1877.*

Sir,

FOR some days past there had been rumours here that Count Andrassy had protested against the occupation of Small Wallachia by the Russian army, and that the order for mobilisation would be issued next Tuesday.

M. Tisza, since his return from Vienna, has contradicted the former, and declared that there is no intention of mobilising at this moment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 567.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 214.) *Berlin, May 22, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, a report I have received from Commander H. H. Grenfell, R.N., Naval Attaché to this Embassy, dated Kiel, May 18th.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 567.

Commander Grenfell, R.N., to Lord Odo Russell.

(Confidential.) *Kiel, May 18, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN pursuance of your Lordship's instructions that I should endeavour to gain information in this port respecting the condition and movements of the Russian squadron in the Baltic, I have the honour to acquaint you that but little is known here of the condition of the Russian ships.

The naval Commander-in-chief, Admiral Werner, assures me that in the autumn of last year the turrets of "Peter the Great" were unfinished, and expressed a doubt whether she is even now ready for sea.

Of the other ships nothing is known.

Admiral Werner stated his conviction that the Russian ships would not descend the Baltic, adding that otherwise he would surely have heard of it.

I give this for what it is worth, remarking that it is unlikely in the present state of affairs that the customary notice of their visit would be forwarded to this port, even should they intend to call here as usual for coal.

I heard from Admiral Werner yesterday that orders have been given to the German squadron to proceed to the Mediterranean on the 27th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUBERT H. GRENFELL, *Naval Attaché.*

No. 568.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, May 24.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 24 Mai, 1877.*

LES nouvelles de la prise d'Ardahan ayant inspiré quelques alarmes aux nombreux habitants de la capitale originaires de ces provinces, une députation de ces derniers s'est présentée aujourd'hui à la Chambre pour lui déclarer qu'ils étaient prêts à tous les sacrifices, et pour appeler en même temps toute la sollicitude de la Chambre sur la situation de l'Armée d'Anatolie. La Chambre, après avoir entendu la députation et pris acte de ses sentiments patriotiques, a fait comprendre aux personnes qui la composaient que le Gouvernement ne négligeait rien pour se montrer à la hauteur de la situation; que l'armée était l'objet constant de la sollicitude de Sa Majesté et de son Gouvernement, et que dans ce moment le meilleur service à rendre à la patrie était de se montrer confiant

dans le dévoûment et dans l'abnégation des représentants officiels et responsables du Gouvernement et de la nation. Après avoir reçu cette réponse, la députation et le nombreux public qui l'avait accompagnée jusqu'à la porte de la Chambre s'est retirée aux cris de "Vive Sa Majesté le Sultan!"

No. 569.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 23, 1877, 11 A.M.*

TELEGRAM from Vice-Consul at Trebizond, dated yesterday morning:—"Official information. On 19th Sabre Pasha fled from Ardahan almost without resisting, and with only 150 killed. Troops, following his example, disbanded."

Porte has received information that Russian army, 35,000 strong, has captured Ardahan. Turkish loss, 26 pieces of artillery, and a number of old and useless cannon; about 150 killed, and as many wounded, amongst latter General Hussein Pasha.

No. 570.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 23, 1877, 2 P.M.*

M. CHRISTICH has just read me a telegram which he has received from M. Ristich, and communicated to the Porte, containing most positive assurances that Servian Government are not concentrating troops, and have no intention whatever of attacking Turkey. He told me in strict confidence that the Russian Consul-General had been inciting Servian Government to attack Turkey, and that he had probably been recalled because Emperor disapproved of proceedings.

No. 571.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 23, 1877, 3 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of 21st instant, Porte states that Indo-European telegraph has been injured by bombardment of Soukoum Kaleh. Orders had been sent to Commanders of Turkish ships to spare the line, but it was found impossible to obey them; and, though deeply regretting the circumstance, the Porte does not see how orders could be given at the present moment to enable the engineers to repair the line in a town which is in a state of rebellion.

No. 572.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 23, 1877, 11·45 P.M.*

TELEGRAMS from Sir A. Kemball of 20th and 21st instant report fall of Ardahan and as follows:—

He states that his worst fears are realized, and that a speedy retreat on Erzinghan is inevitable; that without money, provisions, and cavalry, Moukhtar Pasha can do nothing. Positions of Soghanlee Dagh too extensive for available force; may be turned or cut in two. Kars with 30 battalions supposed to be safe against any odds. He doubts whether Moukhtar Pasha will have time to make provision even for defence of Erzinghan. Army very short of supplies. Artillery limited to 12 horse-batteries, 1 of which is at Ardahan, 3 at Kars, 1 at Bardek (the head-quarters from whence he telegraphs), 2 at Toprak Kaleh, 1 at (name illegible), and 4 supposed to be at Erzinghan. Also 18 mountain-guns distributed over Soghanlee Dagh. The defence of Soghanlee Dagh against superior force of Russians, especially in cavalry, is obviously impossible under existing circumstances. Moukhtar Pasha agrees in opinion with Kemball, and may have, sooner or later, to act upon it by retreating on Erzinghan to make provision for the defence of that place.

Consul at Erzeroum telegraphs to-day that Ardâhân road to Erzeroum is now open being only defended by 6 battalions at Penek, 3 at Olti, and 2 in the Gourgibogaz a few miles east of Hinsk. Russian outpost of right wing has advanced into Penek district and has been seen close to the town. This advance threatens the Commander-in-chief's left flank. Russian left wing has divided: 1 column is approaching Karn Klissa, where Turks have left light battalion; the other proceeds to Hardish, where outpost skirmishes with Van troops have occurred. Much movement observed in Russian centre. Commander-in-chief gone to Chakirbaba. Consul further reports serious excitement and dissatisfaction among Mahommedans at Erzeroum. From Kemball's account, Erzeroum and all Armenia will speedily fall into the hands of the Russians, and in a private letter to me he expresses his opinion that they intend to keep it. He adds that even now, with money and some 20 English officers to control its expenditure and mould the available forces, he would not despair of turning back Russians. But it will soon be too late, and it is for Her Majesty's Government to judge of the consequences of the possession of Armenia by Russia.

No. 573.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 24, 1877, 9 A.M.*

BLUHM PASHA informs me that his plan for the fortification of the lines for the defence of Constantinople at Buyuk Tchekmedji has been adopted; that 15 redoubts are to be constructed first, and the rest of the works will be begun in a month.

Sir C. Dickson will see what is going on there and at Adrianople, where some further defensive works are, I understand, to be constructed.

No. 574.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 24, 1877.*
(Secret.)

THE Russians have numbers of boats and pontoons at Ibraila, Galatz, and Reni. Can get others at Oltenitza and Turnu, although Turks have taken away a great many. Large quantity of timber for bridging purposes is coming by rail from Galicia.

No. 575.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 24, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 24, 5 P.M.*
(Most Confidential.)

I HAD a very long conversation with the Sultan this morning. I informed him fully of the state of affairs in Asia Minor, of which he was ignorant, and placed before him without reserve the condition of his Empire. The result of it leads me to make the following suggestions for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Judging from Kemball's reports, telegraphed to your Lordship yesterday, the whole of Armenia must very shortly be occupied by Russia. The great rise in the Danube will, I am informed on good authority, render it impossible for the Russians to cross the river within a month or more. Considering this state of things, and terrible calamities which will be brought upon Mahommedans and Christians alike by a prolongation of the war, could no some effort be made by Her Majesty's Government with a view to peace?

Russia now holds a material guarantee. What does she require for the protection and better government of Christians of Turkey? The Porte has already done much in the direction pointed out at the Conference; it is ready to do more, and I am inclined to think anything reasonable would be conceded by the Sultan. If the object of Russia be really to obtain an amelioration in the condition of the Christians of Turkey, she could now obtain it. If her object is to obtain territory, and to carry out ambitious designs, England might hold language which might check her.

I cannot fully explain my ideas in a telegram, but I think your Lordship will understand them. Should you think them worthy of consideration, I believe that I could, through the Sultan, do a good deal here; and, after her successes in Armenia, Russia might by pressure be induced to pause. This war has already caused a vast deal of misery, and it is impossible to foresee grave consequences to which it may lead.

No. 576.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 44.)
My Lord, *Tehran, April 18, 1877.*

THE rumours that Persia intended, in the event of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, to side against the latter being still prevalent, I took an opportunity at an interview which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 13th instant, to acquaint him with the substance of your Lordship's despatch No. 7 of the 26th of January last, and urged upon him the expediency of further measures being adopted by the Persian Government with a view to indicate more clearly that such was not their intention.

The substance of our conversation was reported next day by the Minister to the Shah, and the reply which was communicated to me by His Highness on the part of the Shah, was to the following effect:—That although Persia had several grievances against the Porte, for which no satisfaction had been obtained, he had carefully avoided doing anything which would cause embarrassment to Turkey during recent complications; that he had even when last addressed on the subject, by the British Legation, withdrawn to Kermanshah, the military camp which for several years had been established on the Turkish frontier at Zohab; that he was actuated in following this course by his desire to uphold the interests of Islamism, but that he hoped at the same time by adopting this policy to secure the sympathies of England; that he had found, however, that the friendly action of Persia had not been responded to by Turkey in the manner he had anticipated, for intelligence had lately reached this country of a fanatical outrage having been perpetrated upon Persians at Medina; that for several years, owing to ill-treatment of Persians in Turkish territory, the Persian Government had been obliged to suspend entirely the pilgrimage to the shrines of Kerbella and Nejjeff; and that now owing to this act at Medina, if full satisfaction was not afforded, it would become impossible for Persians to perform the one great act of pilgrimage enjoined by their religion at the cities of Mecca and Medina, and that this might produce such a strong feeling of discontent in the country that serious disturbances might be apprehended as the result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 577.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 31. Political.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, April 27, 1877.*

THOUGH I continually received assurances from Samih Pasha, before he was relieved of his command of this army, and since from the Governor-General, that the fortresses and the army were amply provided with ammunition, I now hear from the best sources that such is not the case, and much anxiety is consequently felt.

The Turks did not believe that Russia was seriously bent on going to war; they considered her menacing attitude and her preparations as acts to intimidate, and that it was only necessary for them to show a firm front and persistently to resist her demands, to weary her and compel her at last to abandon the game and retire. They were also persuaded that England would come to their aid if affairs became warlike, and thus render it impossible for Russia to advance if she otherwise would have done so.

These ideas and persuasions influenced their conduct and they have lost time of vital value to them. Thus, while anxiety is felt here regarding ammunition, 25,000 loads are at Trebizonde waiting for means of transport, which cannot be procured, and while officers are scouring the country in search of horses the owners of horses are fleeing to the hills, which are nearly free of snow, to conceal their animals, as they

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well know that they will have no wages and that hard work will very soon kill their horses and ruin them.

The store of small arms is, I am told, exhausted, and the Government will have to keep the reserves, still pouring in from the interior, idle here, if fresh supplies are not sent from Constantinople.

It, however, remains to be seen whether the Russians will allow the Turks the time necessary to get up their supplies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 578.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 32. Political.)
Erzeroom, April 27, 1877.

My Lord,

THE advance of the Russians has produced a very demoralizing effect amongst the Mussulman population here.

So long as the Russian Embassy remained at Constantinople, and the Russian troops were kept within the Russian frontier, the possibility of war was not believed in, and the Mussulmans, from the highest to the lowest, spoke very loudly of their ability to cope with Russia and their anxiety to bring the dispute to an issue, and they were becoming very insolent.

The telegram which brought the news of the departure of the Embassy, awakened the Mussulmans to their true position; they saw that war was inevitable, but their hopes were sustained by a statement in the same telegram that relations between England and Russia were strained. Of this telegram 3,000 copies were printed and immediately distributed.

As later telegrams, however, state nothing in regard to England, this hope even is fading, and the advance of the Russian army has had a very depressing effect.

The military authorities are now busily engaged in arming the works around this town, while the civil administration is endeavouring to collect stores of provisions to meet a siege. Troops are also being hastily pushed on towards the frontier, and the Mustahfiz have been called to arms.

In the midst of all this preparation, a feeling of despondency which presages ill-success to the Turkish arms is evident, and, I believe, that after the loss of one or two battles all resistance to the advance of the Russians will cease and Erzeroom will surrender at the first summons. I have been assured by officers of high rank that this will be the case as regards this town, for while the people will resist having their wives and children exposed to the dangers of a bombardment, the military also, who have their families here, will decline to bring danger on their children by resisting the entry of the Russians.

It is improbable that the Russians will make a serious advance for at least twenty days, as the roads are deep with mud, and grass has not grown sufficiently to afford pasturage for the thousands of animals which must accompany the army.

Operations will, therefore, probably be confined till the middle or end of May to the neighbourhood of the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 579.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 33. Political.)
Erzeroom, April 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Mehmet Pasha, first Aide-de-camp to the Sultan, arrived here yesterday with a verbal message from His Majesty to the army, to the Civil Administration, and to the people of this province.

The heads of the different communities and the chief Mussulmans were summoned to the palace, and in their presence and in that of the civil and military authorities,

Mehmet Pasha said, "the Sultan greeted them all cordially, that he knew how in past times this province had shown its devotion to the Throne, and he had with gratification seen that, under the present crisis, there had been no evidence of any decline in the patriotism of the people. He knew that great sacrifices had been already freely made in the support of his authority, and he was grateful, but the exigencies of the situation required yet greater efforts on the part of the people, but he trusted and he believed, that they would make these sacrifices freely, and would support him in his just cause."

This message was received with loud applause.

To the Governor-General, Ismail Pasha, the Aide-de-camp conveyed, before the assemblage, the personal salutation and the thanks of the Sultan for his unremitted endeavours to carry on efficiently his duties.

Mehmet Pasha is to leave immediately for Kars, where, I believe, the same ceremony is to be enacted; he will then, if he can do so, go to Ardahan and to Beyazid.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 580.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 36. Political.)
Erzeroom, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Governor-General informed me yesterday that Sheikh Shamyl's son, who is at Constantinople, would shortly arrive here to take command of the Circassian legion which is said to be forming in the district of Sivas.

His Excellency also stated that telegrams have been addressed to the Circassians by Shamyl's son, exhorting them to prepare speedily so as to be ready to join the army when he arrives.

Great hopes were reposed in the aid of the Circassians, and the promise of Moussa Pasha to collect and place 15,000 at the disposal of the Government was received with much pleasure.

Up to the present time 150 have reached this, and certainly half the men who have come are physically incapable of carrying arms.

Since the arrival of the first batch of sixty-three men, I have not heard a word from officials of efficient aid from the Circassians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 581.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 38. Political.)
Erzeroom, May 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE to report that I have just been told that the Koords in the Dersim district near Erzingjan are up in arms and are pillaging the villages in the district of Erzingjan.

No details have reached me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

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No. 582.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 25.*)

(No. 39. Political.) *Erzeroom, May 1, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE to report that intelligence has reached this that three tribes of Koords in the Province of Van are now engaged in hostilities against each other, and that the country in that region is in a state of anarchy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 583.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 25.*)

(No. 10. Political.) *Adrianople, May 8, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy and translation of a Circular instruction which the Porte addressed on the 29th ultimo to the Provincial Governors in reference to the war between Russia and Turkey.

It appeals to the authorities and inhabitants for assistance in favour of the Ottoman troops, and exhorts them to maintain order and tranquillity in the country.

I also inclose a copy of Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis' report upon the effect produced among the people here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 583.

Circular Instruction from the Porte to the Provincial Governors in reference to the War with Russia.

15 *Rebouil-Akhir* (1/13 *Avril*, 1877).

(Traduction.)

LES Russes, anciens ennemis de notre patrie comme tout le monde le sait et persécuteurs implacables de la liberté et de la tranquillité publiques, pour arriver à leur but de conquête ont tâché depuis une année et demie d'anéantir notre pays en violant nos droits et en jettant le pays dans de grands malheurs par des menées et des faux récits de toute espèce.

Ayant compris cependant que par cette manière d'agir ils ne parviendraient pas à la réalisation de leurs mauvais projets, ils viennent de nous démontrer ouvertement leur haine, en nous déclarant la guerre sans motif aucun.

Le Gouvernement Impérial par conséquent en s'appuyant sur l'assistance divine s'est empressé de pousser de plus en plus ses préparatifs de défense et de résistance afin de sauvegarder le bonheur et la tranquillité du pays et en même temps Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a donné par les télégrammes qui ont été déjà publiés des ordres au Serdar Ekrem et aux commandants de la flotte et de l'armée pour le châtiment des ennemis.

Comme on peut s'assurer par le contenu de ces télégrammes Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan n'a épargné aucun sacrifice pour sauvegarder les droits et l'indépendance de l'Empire et de la nation Ottomane et pour défendre sa dignité. Il est indubitable que les sujets Ottomans, aussi de leur part, en suivant l'exemple de leur Souverain, s'empresseront par une noble émulation de rendre au pays les services imposés par le devoir de la sujetion et par le sentiment de dévouement. Chez les Osmanlis ces excellentes qualités sont héréditaires et elles ont été fécondes en nobles actions. Ils en ont donné déjà des preuves dans l'affaire de Serbie par des services généreux et patriotiques et en n'épargnant ni leurs biens ni leur vie.

Mais à présent l'état des choses est devenu plus grave et plus important, attendu que nos ennemis emploient toutes leurs pensées et toutes leurs forces pour l'anéantissement de notre patrie et de notre nation. Le Gouvernement par conséquent s'attend à de plus grands secours encore de la part des sujets Ottomans, qui doivent maintenant

le soutenir non-seulement par des services patriotiques mais aussi bien par le moyen d'une parfaite concorde entre eux, en enfants de la même patrie, pour défendre le sol natal et pour repousser les attaques de l'ennemi.

Les diverses catégories de devoirs imposés par le patriotisme et par la sujetion sont aussi bien connues que la nature des secours que le Gouvernement attend de la générosité des habitants de l'Empire. C'est ainsi qu'un grand nombre de braves patriotes, habitants de chaque partie de l'Empire désirant servir dans les rangs de l'armée et se distinguer parmi leurs concitoyens ont commencé à se joindre aux troupes Impériales. La haute valeur de ce noble dévouement est évidente; mais il y a un autre genre de service qui est très valable, c'est-à-dire celui de fournir à l'armée et lui faire parvenir en temps utile, des approvisionnements et des munitions, ce moyen matériel d'assurer le triomphe des armes Impériales, et de pourvoir aussi aux besoins des familles des combattants.

Nous vous invitons donc à recommander aux habitants de votre vilayet l'accomplissement de ces devoirs sacrés de sorte que les braves et vaillants hommes qui veulent combattre pour la défense de la patrie et pour l'honneur de l'Empire soient admis dans les rangs de l'armée auxiliaire et conduits au théâtre de la guerre sous le commandement de chefs honnêtes et dignes de confiance, conformément aux instruction publiées dernièrement. Quant aux autres patriotes qui ne quitteront pas leurs foyers, ils auront à donner toutes les facilités en leur pouvoir aux commandants de l'armée en leur faisant parvenir sans la moindre perte de temps les approvisionnements et munitions nécessaires et en donnant par tous les moyens des preuves de patriotisme et de dévouement.

Comme le mal que notre ennemi s'occupe à nous infliger affect tout le monde, les habitants de l'Empire doivent aujourd'hui plus que jamais maintenir de bonnes relations entre eux. Vivant en parfaite harmonie, ils doivent sous ce point de vue aussi faire preuve de leurs dispositions patriotiques. Les employés du Gouvernement doivent de leur part s'acquitter fidèlement de leurs fonctions.

Vous donnerez publicité à ces instructions spéciales et importantes. Vous aurez soin de les mettre à exécution et de vous conformer en tous points aux hautes dispositions de notre auguste Souverain.

Inclosure 2 in No. 583.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Adrianople, May 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, pursuant to instructions from the Porte, a general meeting of the spiritual chiefs and principal residents in Adrianople was held at the conak on the 3rd instant to solicit assistance in aid of the Ottoman troops.

A special Commission having been formed, and his Excellency the Governor-General, addressing the meeting, 208 pairs of oxen and carts were set down as contributions of Adrianople for military purposes, and 17 pairs of oxen and carts for Demotika. Every district will contribute according to its means.

I am also informed that it has been announced that the Christians will be free to enrol themselves as volunteers to serve either as cavalry or infantry. Also that all Turkish officials in the receipt of salaries exceeding 2,000 piastres a month must contribute the half towards Government assistance.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 584.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 25.*)

(No. 11. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, May 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the inclosed copy of Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis' report on the murder of three Mussulmans at Kyzylagatch, mentioned in my despatch to your Lordship No. 5 of the 30th ultimo.

Your Lordship will observe that there was no mutilation of the bodies of the

murdered men, as had been alleged, and that the rural police attribute the crime to Circassians.

Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, has reported to me the following outrage:—

On the 30th ultimo nine men and one woman from the Bulgarian village of Boïkovo, on Mount Rhodope, went to Palaskioï, a mixed Pomak and Bulgarian village, in order to claim stolen cattle. They were set upon by the Pomaks, among them being the Imam and other chief men of Palaskioï, who wounded two or three of the Bulgarians with their knives. Two of the latter came to Philippopolis and laid a complaint before the authorities, who at once despatched five zaptiehs, accompanied by the plaintiffs, to arrest the accused persons.

On receiving this report, I telegraphed to the Vice-Consul, inquiring whether the cattle in question were stolen recently, or during last year's disturbances. Mr. Calvert has replied as follows:—

The cattle was stolen during last year's disturbances. That the Bulgarians should have ventured to go and claim it without the assistance of the police is an indication of the extent to which confidence has been restored. I will telegraph as soon as any further facts are known.

I immediately brought the matter under the notice of the Vali, who at once telegraphed to the Mutasserif of Philippopolis for his report, which had not yet been communicated to his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 584.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, May 6, 1877.

Sir,

HAVING visited the Caza of Kyzylagatch to make inquiries into the circumstances attending the murder of three Turks who were selling salt from village to village, named Muniinoglu Hussein, Ahmedoglu Mumi, and Ismaïloglu Hassan, of Tossia, in the Caza of Drama, about the 28th of March last, I have the honour to report that Ivanoglu Petko, and Theodoraki, of Buyuk-Mahallé, Bulgarians, who were out working in their fields on the day of the murder, and who partly witnessed the outrage, stated to me that they saw two Circassians pursuing the above-named Turks across fields, and heard shouts and firing in their direction. After watching for some time both the pursued and the pursuers disappeared in the woods. On their return home in the evening the Bulgarians related to their friends what they had seen and heard.

Next morning a "Korudji" (forest-keeper) came from Deyirmenderé and told the villagers that there had been a murder in the woods. A Tchaoush, taking with him some people, went in search, and discovered the dead bodies of two men and one lad, stabbed and shot in several places, but not otherwise mutilated or cut into pieces, nor their tongues cut out, as was at first stated.

Elias Tchaoush, an officer stationed at Hassanbeyli, sent by the authorities to make inquiries into the affair, informed me that he was quite satisfied the murder was committed by two notorious Circassian bandits of Aivadjik, named Buyuk Mussa and Kutchuk Mussa, who subsequently gave themselves up to the authorities in Bourgas. The motive for the murder is supposed to have been vengeance.

The same officer confirmed the general complaints I had heard throughout the Caza, that the Circassians were almost daily committing acts of petty depredation and cattle-lifting, and that they were a source of great annoyance and trouble not only to the Christians but also to the rural authorities, and that the force at the disposal of the Government at Kyzylagatch was totally inadequate to keep those turbulent people in check, there being only sixteen zabtiés to watch over a district containing thirty-five large and small villages.

During my tour of investigation numerous stories were related to me of the thieving propensities of the Circassians, but I will only name a few.

Ivantchoglu Dimko, and Ivan Petro, Bulgarians, of Gargilovo, in the Nahié of Monastir, complained that a few days since they were robbed of two horses.

Ivanoglu Gelo, also a Bulgarian, a very old man, came up to my carriage as I was driving across the country and cried out bitterly that one of his oxen had been taken from him by two Circassians, Araboglu and Hekimoglu, of Kayabouroun, while in the act of ploughing his land preparatory to sowing Indian corn, thus entailing loss and ruin to him.

At Arabli two buffaloes belonging to Pope George were also stolen by Circassians. While I was at Kyzylagatch frequent raids were made, and cattle, corn, and flour carried off. Nicola Yovan likewise had a horse stolen, and Baktchevan Petro was robbed of money and also beaten.

Apart from the misdeeds of the Circassians it is satisfactory to learn that on the 30th ultimo a regiment of cavalry, consisting of 600 men and horses, passed through this Caza, conducting themselves in a most orderly manner all the way from Adrianople to Yamboli and Slimnia. They gave no cause of complaint to the Christian population as far as I could learn, and they paid in ready cash for all they consumed on the march.

In conclusion, I may add that, excepting the irregularities of the Circassians, I observed that the utmost tranquillity and quiet prevailed throughout the district I have just visited, where both Mussulmans and Christians live and labour peaceably together in joyful expectation of reaping an abundant harvest, as the rising crops so far look extremely healthy and promise a large yield.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 585.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 11. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, May* 10, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 7 of the 5th instant, relative to military preparations in this vilayet, I have the honour to inclose the copy of a further report on the same subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 585.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, May* 10, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Excellency the translation of a notice published in the "Edirné" (the Adrianople Official Gazette) of the 8th instant, inviting Circassians to volunteer for service in the special auxiliary corps which is being formed at the capital under the command of Nouseret Pasha.*

Since that notice was issued the Vali has received orders from the Porte to send on to the Danube, and not to Constantinople, any Circassians who may present themselves for enrolment.

I had the honour to report to your Excellency, in my despatch of the 5th instant, that the Porte had ordered the mounted police force of this vilayet to be dispatched to the seat of war. Instructions have now been received to send on the foot police also.

The Vali has further received to-day a pressing request from the Commander-in-chief to send forward the mounted police without delay, Abd-ul Kerim Pasha stating at the same time that he has been informed that the Russians have already crossed the Danube. The Serdar Ekrem does not specify where or when this is reported to have taken place; and the Vali surmises that Abd-ul Kerim Pasha's object in making the statement is merely to stimulate compliance with his request. The Vali, however, is most anxious, and with good reason, not to leave the vilayet without police, and especially without the mounted zabtiehs, until arrangements have been made for organizing a mounted corps from the Mustahfiz garrison for temporary police purposes. In this view it is very desirable his Excellency should be supported by the Government, for, considering what happened in this vilayet last year and the disposition shown by the Circassians to avail themselves of the present political situation for

* A Circassian brought up in France.

extending their depredations, it would be most imprudent to diminish at all, let alone to do away with, the means of repressing disorders.

Out of the mounted police, which consists of some 1,500 men (and not 2,000, as I previously reported), only 700 men will be available for active service in the field, the remainder coming under the categories which exempt conscripts from service.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 585.

Extract from the Adrianople "Official Gazette" of May 8, 1877.

(Translation.)

NOTICE.—NOUSRET PASHA having been appointed Commander-in-chief of the Circassian auxiliary corps which is being formed, his Excellency has telegraphed to the Provincial Government here to give notice to the brave Circassians in this province, who may wish to volunteer for service in that corps, that they should proceed at once to the capital, in order to be enrolled there.

The authorities have accordingly taken the necessary steps to make this known to the Circassians.

No. 586.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 25.*)

(No. 13. Political.)

Adrianople, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the inclosed copies of reports from the Vice-Consuls at Gallipoli and Enos and the Consular Agent at Rodosto, relative to the state of the country within their respective districts.

Your Lordship will perceive that those reports agree in stating that the demeanour of the Mussulman population towards the Christians is most satisfactory. This state of things is confirmed by the accounts which are received by the principal foreign mercantile houses here from their agents in different parts of the vilayet.

As regards the one partial exception to this rule, the Pomak outrage at Palaskioï, reported in my despatch to your Lordship No. 11 of the 8th instant, I am happy to state that Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, now informs me that the matter has proved to be far less serious than it at first appeared to be. The Bulgarians were, it is true, severely beaten, but none were wounded. I shall report fully to your Lordship on the subject as soon as all the facts are ascertained.

The only disturbers of the public peace, generally speaking, are the Circassians, who continue their raids as before, Mussulmans and Christians being sufferers alike from this scourge. On this head, Mr. Vice-Consul Brophy, of Bourgas, reports that since the departure of the cavalry from those parts, and within the space of five days, one Bulgarian has been killed and another severely wounded.

I venture further to inclose the translation of a letter published by the Greek newspaper "Neologos," showing that in the Caza of Kirk-Kilisse (dependent on the Sandjak of Adrianople proper) the Government authorities are doing their duty. This testimony is the more valuable because the journal in question has always eagerly put forward facts unfavourable to Turkish provincial administration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 586.

Vice-Consul Odone to Consul Blunt.

Gallipoli, le 7 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul,

POUR répondre à votre demande sur l'état actuel de l'esprit de la population Musulmane de ma circonscription Consulaire motivé par la déclaration de guerre de la Russie, je crois bien faire en vous envoyant l'extrait d'une dépêche que j'ai eu l'honneur

d'adresser le 28 Avril dernier, à M. Fawcett, Consul-Général à Constantinople. J'y ajoute un rapport précédent sous la date 16 idem.

L'esprit Mahométan continue à être calme, seulement depuis deux ou trois jours je remarque une certaine tendance de démonstration de menace de la part de quelques fanatiques contre les Chrétiens et certains cas isolés aussi de menaces pour se procurer de l'argent. Les informations que je reçois de Charkeuï, Kessan, Ipsala, &c., sont identiques à ce qui précède.

Je ne puis me dissimuler qu'il y a quelque chose de latent dans l'esprit d'une partie de la population Musulmane qui pourrait se traduire, le cas échéant, en manifestations et peut-être en faits très-désagréables, mais aussi je suis pleinement convaincu qu'il dépendrait de l'énergie des préposés au Gouvernement du sandjak et des cazas de contrecarrer toutes malveillantes manifestations.

Le vrai mal git dans la mauvaise administration et dans les mauvais fonctionnaires dont la majeure partie est toujours portée à fomenter secrètement les manifestations que d'autre part elle fait semblant de vouloir reprimer.

La population Musulmane prétend avoir une supériorité sur la population Chrétienne mais en réalité cette prétention n'aurait pas raison d'être si les préposés de l'administration montraient d'une manière énergique que cette supériorité ne peut pas exister devant la loi. La population Musulmane du Sandjak de Gallipoli, exception faite peut-être de celle de Ghimmurdjina, ne saurait résister à une autorité bien constituée et qui en se respectant elle-même saurait inspirer le respect qui lui est dû. Malheureusement il en est tout-à-fait autrement, et comme je l'ai dit plus haut, la majeure partie des fonctionnaires ferait cause commune avec les Mahométans si jamais des faits regrettables viendraient avoir lieu. C'est pourquoi l'esprit des populations Chrétiennes ne peut être calme. Les cas isolés de violence et de menaces qui se produisent et contre lesquels l'administration ne cherche pas un moyen de repression inspirent beaucoup de crainte aux Chrétiens. Il faudrait couper le mal à sa racine, c'est-à-dire à la mauvaise administration.

C'est un fait incontestable que la majeure partie des Juges du sandjak fait preuve de partialité dans l'administration de la justice, et c'est là une des causes principales du mécontentement des populations Chrétiennes qui ont beaucoup de crainte de déplaire aux Turcs dans n'importe quelle occasion.

Après tout ce qui précède je dois dire que malgré tout il est évident que les populations Chrétiennes aimeraient mieux de rester dans le *statu quo* plutôt que de changer le Gouvernement actuel contre un Gouvernement Russe. Un peu de condescendance de la part de la population Musulmane et une meilleure administration, égale pour les Musulmans et Chrétiens, ferait de ces derniers les sujets les plus loyaux.

(Signé) A. ODONE.

Inclysure 2 in No. 586.

Vice-Consul Rossy to Consul Blunt.

Enos, le 7 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de votre lettre du 1er courant, qui m'est parvenue hier, et qui m'annonce votre nomination comme Consul de Sa Majesté à Andrinople. Conformément aux instructions du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères en date de 27 Mars et celle de M. le Consul-Général Fawcett du 11 du mois écoulé, j'ai déjà pris les informations nécessaires et d'après les derniers avis reçus de sources dignes de confiance, une tranquillité parfaite règne dans tous les districts sous ma jurisdiction Consulaire, savoir: Enos, Kéchan, Ibsalla, Férrédjik Dédéagatch, et Makri. L'esprit de la population en général est calme, grâce à la sagesse de la Sublime Porte, qui a donné des ordres strictes à cet effet à toutes les autorités des districts en question.

(Signé) J. ROSSY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 586.

M. Dussi to Consul Blunt.

(Extrait.)

Rodosto, le 7 Mai, 1877.

J'AI l'avantage de répondre à votre dépêche du 1er Mai.

Comme j'ai déjà eu l'honneur de l'écrire au Consulat-Général de Constantinople,

l'esprit des populations Chrétiennes et Musulmanes de ma circonscription Consulaire est très-calme et leurs rapports sont assez amicaux.

Inclosure 4 in No. 586.

Letter from Kirk-Kilissé, published by the "Neologos" Newspaper.

(Traduction.)

LE Gouvernement fait d'énormes provisions en gros bétail pour les besoins des troupes. L'équivalent est payé immédiatement. Beaucoup de Circassiens s'enrôlent comme volontaires. Des prières ont été lues dans toutes les églises et mosquées pour le triomphe des armes Impériales. Nos autorités ont pris une sage mesure, c'est de faire accompagner les précepteurs de dîmes de deux Chrétiens afin qu'il ne puisse y avoir d'abus dans la perception des dîmes.

J'ai le plaisir de vous annoncer que les Circassiens n'ont pas comme autrefois les coudées franches. L'autorité fait tout ce qui est possible pour prévenir leurs vols. Ceux qui tombent sous la main expient bien cher leurs méfaits dans les différentes prisons. Notre Mulazim Youssouf Effendi a eu ces derniers jours une rencontre assez sérieuse avec une bande de Circassiens qui avaient volé quelques moutons et voulaient les défendre par les armes. Notre brave Mulazim a eu bientôt raison d'eux. Dans l'engagement deux ont été blessés et un autre a été capturé.

No. 587.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 12. Confidential.)

Sulina, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

IN justification of the course taken by me, as mentioned in the postscript of my letter to your Lordship No. 11 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to inclose copies of the telegrams which the Consuls at Toultcha had transmitted to Constantinople, and of which they forwarded copies to the French Commissioner and myself at Sulina, and also extracts from a letter written to me from Toultcha by our Inspector-General of the Navigation.

On arriving at Toultcha on the 2nd instant, we found a large lighter and tug, which had been despatched from Sulina the evening before, in order to convey away strangers from Toultcha, in the act of leaving empty, so great was the confidence already inspired by the knowledge that Her Majesty's ship "Cockatrice" was expected there.

We found that the panic in the town had arisen, in the first instance, from the orders which Said Pasha, the Governor, had received to evacuate the place; secondly, because the Circassians were plundering the surrounding villages, and it was also feared that they would also attack and plunder the town after the Pasha and troops had retired from it; and, thirdly, from a want of confidence and co-operation between the Consuls and the Pasha.

We had frequent interviews with both parties, and became convinced that the Consuls were too prone to exaggerate the danger, and to embarrass instead of aiding the Pasha in his endeavours to restore confidence. He represented to them that he had not even the means to carry out the order for evacuation; that as long as he remained he would answer for tranquillity; that he was getting the Circassians in hand, and there would be nothing to fear from them, and the only danger would result from disturbances amongst the townspeople themselves during the interval between his departure and the arrival of the Russians.

We also endeavoured to impress these views upon the Consuls, but I am afraid without success; and I therefore, on leaving, authorized the Inspector-General of the Navigation to inform the principal inhabitants of the true situation of affairs, and that all they had to do was to take some measures, such as the creation of a sort of civic guard, &c., to insure tranquillity in the interval above alluded to.

As I am well known at Toultcha, numbers of rayahs from the surrounding villages came to me to report their losses by the Circassians, and asking for aid, and in all instances I found the Pasha ready to go at once into the case and render redress.

I subsequently learnt that he had caused the Circassians to restore the cattle, &c., they had stolen.

In fact, M. Herbette and myself are fully persuaded of the loyalty and good good intentions of Said Pasha towards all classes of the inhabitants.

On the 6th instant I telegraphed to Mr. Layard that the situation was much improved, and that the "Cockatrice" would return to Sulina on the 10th instant.

On the 8th a French gun-boat arrived at Toultcha, for the purpose of withdrawing any strangers who might wish to leave; and on the 10th both gun-boats returned to Sulina.

M. Herbette and I have still some business to transact here, but propose in a few days to return to Galatz viâ Toultcha and Ismail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE, *Lieutenant.-Colonel, R.E., British Commissioner on Danube.*

Inclosure in No. 587.

Télégrammes chiffrés par le Consul de France à Toultcha à l'Ambassade de France à Constantinople et aux noms des Consuls d'Autriche-Hongrie et de Grèce.

Chargé d'Affaires de France, Constantinople.

9 h. soir, le 30 Avril, 1877.

LE Gouverneur de Toultcha, Saïd Pacha, a réuni aujourd'hui son Conseil en séance secrète et a lû un télégramme qu'il a reçu du Gouverneur-Général et qui lui provient de Constantinople où il est dit: vous devez vous retirer devant l'ennemi, prévenir les populations de se retirer, et faire brûler tout sur notre passage depuis le Danube jusqu'à Kustendjie-Czernavoda.

Cet ordre doit être publié demain après un nouveau Conseil.

Nous tenons cette nouvelle de diverses personnes si digne de foi que nous ne pouvons douter de l'existance de cet ordre. Nous nous rendons immédiatement chez le Gouverneur pour le sommer de nous dire la vérité.

Nous prions nos Gouvernements d'empêcher cette horreur.

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2 h. A.M., le 1 Mai, 1877.

Le Gouverneur que nous venons de voir répond qu'il a en effet reçu l'ordre de faire évacuer la ville par tous les sujets Ottomans, mais que la mesure ne concerne pas sujets étrangers, et qu'il répond de leur vie, de leurs biens, de leur honneur tant que l'autorité Ottomane restera dans la ville.

Sitôt que les Russes attaqueront, il ne répond plus pour rien. Le Gouverneur ne s'explique pas catégoriquement sur la nature des mesures coercitives qu'il emploiera pour emmener avec lui 20,000 personnes.

Une corvette cuirassée embossée devant la ville, la batterie qui la domine, les Circassiens qui pillent déjà villages en disent assez. Il nous sera impossible d'empêcher nos nationaux de n'être pas plus ou moins atteints. Toutes les familles Turques ont quitté la ville, qui commence à se remplir de Turcs armés. Les horreurs de Bulgarie ne seront rien à côté de ce qui va se passer ici.

M. de Drigalski, Inspecteur-Général de la Navigation, au Colonel Siborne.

(Extrait.)

Toultcha, le 1 Mai, 1877.

Ainsi que le Gouverneur a répondu à ma question directe, la Sublime Porte lui a ordonné, en cas d'une invasion des Russes à Isakktcha, de forcer la population de Toultcha d'abandonner immédiatement la ville en emportant avec eux toutes les provisions possibles et de détruire le reste que ne serait pas transportable.

En cas de refus on emploirait la force la plus énergique. Sur une question directe le Gouverneur n'a pas voulu m'expliquer plus longuement jusqu'à quel point il comptait faire usage de la force.

La ville est dans la plus grande panique et la population perd de plus en plus le sangfroid, malgré tout ce qu'on peut lui dire pour la tranquilliser.

Ne serait-il pas possible en pareille situation d'envoyer le "Cockatrice" ici? Les

Consuls, d'après ce qu'ils disent, n'ont pu faire cette demande parcequ'ils ne s'y sont pas crus autorisés. Ils m'ont néanmoins autorisé à vous communiquer que leur propre protection aussi bien que celle de toute la population dépend de cette mesure.

Le temps s'écoule, et plutôt cette protection arrivera plus les conséquences s'en feront sentir.

No. 588.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 438.)

Therapia, May 11, 1877.

My Lord,

SAID PACHA, the chief of the Sultan's military household, called upon me this afternoon and informed me that he had been sent by His Majesty to request me to convey by telegraph to the Queen and Her Majesty's Government, the expresson of his deep gratitude for the answer returned by your Lordship to Prince Gortchakow's Circular. His Majesty had desired his Excellency further to say that he and his people felt most deeply, and would never forget, the justice that the Queen and Her Majesty's Government had rendered to them, by placing solemnly before the world the truth with respect to the conduct of Russia.

I have received similar expressions of gratitude and thanks from the Grand Vizier and Salvet Pasha, who both declared that they wanted words to say all that they felt on the subject of your Lordship's despatch. Achmet Vefyk Pasha, President of the Chamber, also called upon me to request that I would convey to your Lordship and Her Majesty's Government on behalf of himself and the Deputies, their grateful acknowledgments, and assure your Lordship of the high sense they entertained of the impartial manner in which your Lordship had dealt with the question at issue between Russia and Turkey, which had unhappily led to war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 589.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 440.)

Therapia, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had an interesting conversation with Dr. Washburn, the Principal of the "Robert College" at which, as your Lordship is aware, Christian youths of different races and creeds, subjects of the Porte, are educated. Dr. Washburn is in constant communication with young men who have been brought up under his superintendence, and who are now scattered about in various parts of the Turkish Empire. He has, therefore, the best means of acquiring trustworthy information as to all that is passing in the Turkish provinces in Europe and in Asia, especially with respect to the Christian populations. Some of his statements to me are worthy of your Lordship's attention.

In the first place, Dr. Washburn entirely corroborates what has been said to me by the heads of every religious creed in this country, that the Christians of all denominations are convinced that they would have a far better chance of preserving and developing their national character and religion under the Turkish rule, with all its faults and vices, which they fully admit, than under that of Russia. Their unanimity on this subject, which I have reported to your Lordship in more than one despatch, is very remarkable, and deserves the impartial consideration of those who still believe that Russia has declared war against Turkey for the benefit of the Christians and at their urgent solicitation.

As an example of the feeling on this subject of the best educated and most intelligent Bulgarians, Dr. Washburn cited the fact that out of the 400 or 500 who had received their education at Robert College, only one was suspected of any participation in the intrigues which led to the attempted rising of the Bulgarian Christian population last year. This person was imprisoned, but no evidence having been produced against him, he was immediately released. All the Bulgarians brought up at the College, who speak English, and who are capable of forming a fair and accurate judgment as to the condition and wants of their country, were opposed to, and strongly condemned, the proceedings of those who instigated the attempted Bulgarian insurrection, and those who took part in it.

A large number of Bulgarians, Dr. Washburn states, now understand that they were deceived and misled by Russian and other foreign emissaries, and deeply deplore the part which they were induced to take and which has brought so much misery upon them. On the other hand, the more respectable Turks repent of their conduct towards the Christians, and Dr. Washburn had been informed by a Bulgarian gentleman that three Turks of the town of Kasanlik had died of broken heart from the remorse that they had felt for the murder of innocent Christians, especially children.

I asked Dr. Washburn whether he believed in this story. He replied that he did, as the Turks were generally humane; but that they had completely lost their heads during the panic which ensued when the Christians attempted to rise, and had commenced a slaughter of the Mahommedans.

Dr. Washburn described the state of the Bulgarian provinces as being at present satisfactory, with the exception of robberies and other outrages, committed by Circassian marauders, and the feeling between the Mussulmans and Christians to be greatly improved, thus corroborating the accounts sent to your Lordship by Mr. Blunt. He admitted, however, that in case of any decided successes on the part of Russia, and their advance into the interior of the country, this state of things might change. With reference to Constantinople, he observed that the city had never been so quiet since the beginning of the Turkish question as at the present time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 590.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 441.)

Therapia, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. MOORE has lately telegraphed to me with reference to the anxiety felt by British subjects in Jerusalem and Palestine, and I fear that there may be some cause for that anxiety. I am doing all in my power, by representations to the Porte on this subject, to induce it to take measures for the security of the life and property of foreigners in this and other parts of Turkey; but it naturally replies that, engaged as it is, in a life and death struggle with Russia, it is compelled to make every effort to increase its armies to the utmost, and for this purpose to bring from the provinces all the forces it can dispose of to be sent to the front. Those who are the cause of this war are alone to be held responsible for the misery and injury to life and property that may ensue from it.

However, your Lordship may rest assured that I will do my best, as I have hitherto done, to make the Porte understand how important it is, in its own interests, to afford the protection required.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 591.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 442.)

Therapia, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 381 of 3rd instant, I had the honour to inform your Lordship that Shefket Pasha, having been removed from the command given to him on the Danube in consequence of my representations, was to be sent, in a kind of exile, to Bagdad. After the distinct promises given me by the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs to that effect, I was not a little surprised to find that he had been appointed to an important command at Erzeroum. I at once sent Mr. Sandison to the two Ministers to protest against this breach of faith, and to inform them that unless Shefket Pasha's nomination was immediately cancelled, I should decline to receive any communication from them except in writing, and should report the circumstances of the case to Her Majesty's Government, leaving to the Porte the responsibility of the consequences.

The Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha could not but admit that I was justified in the course that I had taken, and orders have now been given for the removal of Shefket Pasha to Bagdad, which I trust will not be disobeyed.

There is no doubt that the appointment of Shefket Pasha to Erzeroum was made by Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, in opposition to the desires of the Sultan and to the promises of his colleagues. The influence of this Minister, who is notoriously ignorant and corrupt, is persistently used to the injury of his sovereign and country.

I have the honour to inclose copy of the Memorandum which I directed Mr. Sandison to read to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha, and of his report of their answers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 591.

Memorandum.

MR. LAYARD has learnt with the greatest surprise that Chefket Pasha has been appointed to a command in Asia Minor and has left or is about to leave for Erzeroom. Mr. Layard relying upon a positive order given by his Highness the Grand Vizier in the presence of the Embassy Dragoman, who was desired to report the fact to Mr. Layard, that Shefket Pasha's appointment to a command in the army on the Danube should be cancelled, and he himself sent to Bagdad, and upon the distinct assurance to the same effect given to him by his Excellency Safvet Pasha, had so informed Her Majesty's Government, Mr. Layard now finds, with the deepest regret, that he has been deceived. He begs, therefore, to inform his Highness and his Excellency that unless Shefket Pasha's nomination be revoked, he must decline to accept any communications from the Sultan's Ministers except in writing. He will inform Her Majesty's Government of the circumstances of this case, and he must leave the responsibility of the consequence to the Porte.

Mr. Layard begs to repeat the three points upon which he has received assurances from the Grand Vizier and his Excellency Safvet Pasha, which he has communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

1. An amnesty to the imprisoned Christian Bulgarians.
2. The removal of Achmet Agha, Beetash Millo (both condemned to death) and others condemned to various terms of imprisonment for complicity in the Bulgarian outrages, to Bengbazi.
3. The non-employment of Shefket Pasha.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

May 12, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 591.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, May* 13, 1877.

ACTING under your Excellency's instructions of yesterday's date, I need hardly say that I met with no difficulty in getting the Porte to cancel immediately Shefket Pasha's appointment to a military command at Kars. Having first mentioned the subject to Safvet Pasha, who did not at all approve of the Seraskier's selection, and strongly protested against the appointment; as directed by your Excellency, I also called the Grand Vizier's serious attention to the matter. His Highness instantly gave categorical orders, in my presence, to the effect that Shefket Pasha should absolutely be deprived of his new command at Kars, and he himself sent to Bagdad, where he is to have military employment in accordance with the decision which had lately been come to by the Porte, when your Excellency strongly objected to his appointment to a command in the army of the Danube.

In reply to your Excellency's demand as regards the criminals implicated in the Bulgarian atrocities, his Highness stated that the Porte had actually decided to send them to Bingazi; but that he could not yet satisfy your Excellency with reference to the amnesty to the Bulgarian prisoners, inasmuch as the matter still rested with the

Sultan, who had commanded Said Pasha, on Friday last, to communicate with you on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 592.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 443.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May* 13, 1877.

THE Chamber of Deputies gave yesterday a remarkable proof of its independence, and of the important part that it may hereafter play, if permitted by Russia to exist, in the future reform of the administration of the Empire, and the development of the rights and liberties of its various populations. In the first part of its Session a Mussulman Member for Smyrna made an elaborate criticism upon the mismanagement of the War Department, pointing out that it was necessary for the interests of the Empire that Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, should be removed and, as he had given proofs of military capacity, should be sent to serve his country either with the army in Roumelia, or with that of Anatolia, and that all matters connected with contracts, and purchases for the army, should be left in other hands,—a broad hint of the public opinion as to the honesty of the Minister. Afterwards a report of the Committee, or Bureau, to which the financial measures of the Government are referred, was read and gave rise to a warm and prolonged discussion.

It stated that the Chamber had authorized the Government to raise a loan of 5,000,000*l.* sterling, upon the express condition that the amount obtained should be devoted exclusively to the means taken for the defence of the country, and that a strict account of the manner in which it was expended should be rendered to the Assembly. The Committee condemned the appointment of Zuhti Effendi by the Government as their agent abroad to negotiate the loan, on the ground that when employed, some years ago, on a similar mission, the European press and that of Turkey had accused him of dishonesty, and that, consequently, an unfavourable impression would be caused by his being sent a second time. The report of the Committee was approved almost unanimously, only three Deputies voting against it, and was subsequently submitted to the Grand Vizier. Both Mussulmans and Christians took part in the debate, and the financial administration of the Government was vigorously criticized and condemned. It was specially attacked for the exemption which the capital enjoys from pecuniary and other burdens, whilst the provinces have been called upon to make enormous sacrifices, which they have readily and willingly made for the good of the country.

The vote of the Chamber was, in fact, one of want of confidence in the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 593.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 444.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May* 14, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 416 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a report from Mr. Mariniteh, relating to the measures taken by the Porte for the construction, by forced labour, of the fortifications for the defence of Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 593.

Mr. Marinitch to Mr. Layard.

Pera, le 14 *Mai*, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AVAIS eu l'honneur d'informer votre Excellence que le Gouvernement Impérial, dans le but d'opposer une résistance sérieuse à l'ennemi pour le cas où les Russes, après avoir traversé le Danube et franchi les Balkans, se porteraient vers Constantinople, avait décidé de faire élever une série d'ouvrages qui, partant du lac de Derkos, dans la Mer Noire, viendraient aboutir au lac de Buyak-Tchekmedgi, dans la Mer de Marmara, et que ces rétranchements seraient construits par la population elle-même sous la direction des autorités militaires au moyen de prestations.

Comme le Gouvernement Impérial vient de faire décréter la mise en exécution de cette mesure exceptionnelle, qui n'a pas manqué de causer une certaine alarme parmi les diverses classes de la population, il serait, je pense, utile et nécessaire de mettre votre Excellence à même de connaître les dispositions qui viennent d'être prises à cet égard par la Préfecture de la ville et le Ministère de la Police et qui ont été déjà communiquées officiellement aux Imams et Moukhtars de tous les quartiers de la capitale et des alentours.

Toute la population Ottomane indistinctement est appelée à concourir aux travaux de ces fortifications. Les limites d'âge du corvéable sont de seize à soixante ans inclusivement.

La durée du service gratuit que doit prêter chaque individu est de quatre jours.

Le Gouvernement appelera pour ce travail 4,000 personnes à la fois. Cependant comme il est sûr d'avance que de celles-ci 1,000 à peine se rendront à l'appel et que le reste se fera remplacer ou s'exonerera au moyen d'une redevance de 10 piastres "caimé" par jour, soit 40 piastres, fixées par l'Etat pour ces quatre jours de prestation, et en vue de pouvoir parer aux inconvénients qui en résulteraient, a engagé pour son compte 3,000 ouvriers salariés, qui s'installeront en permanence sur les lieux et seront pour ainsi dire comme le noyau principal des travailleurs.

Tous ces ouvriers et corvéables construiront les fortifications sous la direction et la surveillance directe des officiers d'artillerie et d'état major. Tout le régiment du génie se rendra aussi par les lieux pour co-opérer à l'exécution de ces travaux de défense.

En attendant, deux Commissions sont en voie de formation au Ministère de la Police; elles seront composées exclusivement de fonctionnaires de ce Département et de ceux de la Préfecture de la ville et agiront suivant les instructions dont elles vont être munies. L'une de ces Commissions siégera à Constantinople et aura pour mandat principal d'organiser l'expédition des prestataires, l'autre se trouvera sur les lieux et sa mission sera de les recevoir et les placer à la disposition des officiers de génie chargés de la direction des travaux.

L'inscription des corvéables a déjà commencé à Stamboul parmi les artisans et leurs apprentis et se poursuit très activement, de sorte qu'il y a tout lieu de croire que les travaux vont être entrepris dans le plus bref délai.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

(Signé) H. MARINITCH.

No. 594.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 445.)

Therapia, May 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour of stating to your Lordship in my telegram No. 81 of the 12th instant, that the Porte had informed me that the Turkish troops had gained an important victory over the Russians in the neighbourhood of Batoum. The truth of this report has now been fully confirmed from public and private sources. It would appear that a considerable body of Russians were endeavouring to force their way over a steep mountain commanding the fortress, when they fell into an ambush skilfully laid for them, and were cut to pieces. According to the accounts that have been received, the number of killed and wounded may not have been overstated at 4,000. This feat of arms was accomplished by irregulars, or Bashi-Bazouks, and has caused very general satisfaction among the Turks.

On the other hand, the news that one of their best gun-boats in the Danube had been blown up by accident, with the loss of the whole of her crew, except three men, or, according to another report, only one man, has led to a feeling of depression. The vessel destroyed was one of two powerful armour-plated gun-boats purchased from the French Government for 100,000*l*. She carried four heavy rifled Armstrong guns. Her loss at the present moment is very serious to the Turks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 595.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 446. Secret.)

Therapia, May 13, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Porte is contemplating an expedition by which it believes that it may be able to interrupt the Russian lines of communication through the Caucasus, or at any rate to cause the Russians serious embarrassment in the rear of their armies operating in Armenia. It is proposed to land about 10,000 Circassians, who, I am assured, are ready for the purpose, on some part of the coast of Circassia. The tribes in Daghistan and other parts of the Caucasus are believed to be ready to rise, and will be furnished with arms. It is hoped that with their assistance the high road leading to Tiflis may be cut off, or the Russians be compelled to weaken their forces in Asia Minor by detaching a considerable body of troops from thence to re-establish and maintain their communication.

Hobart Pasha is to have the management of the landing of the Circassians, and I understand that Schamyl's son will take part in the expedition, if carried out.

This information, which comes from a completely trustworthy source, has been given to me very secretly.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 596.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 447. Very Confidential.)

Therapia, May 13, 1877.

My Lord,

THE eldest son of the celebrated Circassian Chief, Sheikh Schamyl, called upon me this morning. He informed me that he was about to leave for Erzeroom to place himself at the head of a body of Circassian irregular troops that were to be employed against the Russians. I told him the best service he could render the Turkish Government was to use his influence to keep these Circassians in order, and to prevent them plundering villages and committing outrages upon Mohammedans and Christians alike. He said that he would do so, but that he could not be responsible for the misdeeds of those who did not recognize his authority, as they belonged to tribes of the Caucasus, who were under Mousa, Ibrahim, and Nesrif Pashas.

I asked the Bey whether the Porte looked to any assistance from the Circassian and other Caucasian tribes now under Russian rule. He said that it did, and that it was in communication with some of their Chiefs. They hated Russian rule, which was arbitrary and cruel. There was no justice under it, and if a Circassian was murdered by a Russian, and his family ventured to complain, they were at once sent to Siberia. A Chief who accompanied Sheikh Schamyl's son confirmed this statement, and mentioned one or two facts of which, he said, he had been an eye-witness; but these populations, the Bey added, although ready to rise against their oppressors, would scarcely do so at the instigation of the Porte, unless they had, at the same time, the guarantee of some great Power, such as England, that they would not be deserted when peace was made and left to Russian vengeance. He was anxious to learn whether, in the event of England going to war with Russia, the Circassians and the inhabitants of Daghistan could expect any assistance from her. I told him that I could hold out no hope of the kind to him, or give him any information on the subject.

Sheikh Schamyl's son introduced his brother-in-law, Mahmoud Bey, who accompanied him, to me. This Chief informed me that he had been an Aide-de-camp to the Emperor Nicholas, and that last year he had been employed to distribute secretly arms and money amongst the Christians and Circassians in the Bulgarian provinces of Turkey, with a view to the insurrection which afterwards took place. When war between Turkey and Russia became imminent, he left the Russian service to join his brother-in-law, the son of his old Chief Schamyl, to fight against the hereditary enemy of his race.

The Porte, I believe, hopes much from the Circassians. Former experience, however, appears to prove that in their own country they are little to be depended upon, and they have shown in Turkey that they are more dangerous to their friends than to their enemies. However, if the Turkish Government took proper measures to bring their Circassian subjects under discipline, and to organize them as irregular cavalry under good officers, they might become very valuable troops, and, perhaps, a match for the Russian cossacks. I am informed that the Porte intends to take some steps in this direction. It is, unfortunately, rather late to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 597.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 449. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 14, 1877.*

BOTH the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha have expressed to me some alarm at the appointment of the Prince of Reuss as German Ambassador to the Porte. They say that he is known for his strong Russian sympathies and tendencies, and that they are informed that the Princess is related to the Imperial Family of Russia. Connecting this nomination with the manner in which, in violation of all international law and precedent, Germany imposed upon Turkey by threats her protection of Russian subjects and interests, they fear that she will extend that protection to the Russian agents and conspirators who, they allege, are now actively engaged in endeavouring to promote disorder, outrage, and insurrection, and that Russia will consequently find a useful ally, and Turkey a dangerous enemy, within the Sultan's territories.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 598.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 453.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 14, 1877.*

I HAVE again made representations at the Porte as to the necessity of immediate and effectual steps being taken to protect the lives and property of foreigners in different parts of the Empire from which the regular troops are being withdrawn for service in the field against the Russians. I have especially drawn Safvet Pasha's attention to the alarm felt by British subjects at Jerusalem. The French Chargé d'Affaires has also brought the state of things in that city to the notice of his Excellency, who to-day wrote to the Minister of War to give orders that a sufficient number of troops should be left there for the proper protection both of foreigners and the Christian population.

I have informed Mr. Moore by telegraph that these orders have been given.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 599.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 454.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of an Address which has been voted by the Turkish Chambers of Deputies to Her Majesty's Government and the English people, and which was presented to me this morning by the two Vice-Presidents, Beha-ed-din Effendi, a Seyyid, or descendant of the Prophet, and Member for Broussa, and Khodeda Verdi Effendi, an Armenian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 599.

Address presented to Mr. Layard by the Chamber of Deputies relative to the Reply of the English Government to Prince Gortchakow's Circular.

(Traduction.)

AINSI qu'il est prouvé par des précédents multiples, toutes les fois qu'un signe de progrès s'est manifesté dans l'Empire Ottoman, la Russie, cet ennemi séculaire de notre nation, a tout de suite trouvé un prétexte futile pour nous déclarer la guerre. Guidés par ces précédents, nous vous attendions de sa part, cette fois ci encore, à une agression contre la nation Ottomane.

Non content d'avoir brûlé une quantité de gens innocents dans le feu des intrigues qu'elle avait ourdies depuis dix ans en dépensant des trésors, d'avoir fait égoyer une quantité d'enfants et de femmes Musulmanes et d'avoir fait tomber dans toutes espèces de malheurs plusieurs de nos concitoyens, la Russie est parvenue par le moyen de ses intrigues multiples à donner du retentissement à ses calomnies et à remuer les esprits, au point qu'elle est parvenu à tromper bien des personnes équitables et à soulever contre nous des hommes justes et honnêtes. Nous ne nous étonnons pas de ces procédés de notre ennemi, et la nation Ottomane en s'appuyant sur la sagesse du proverbe, qui dit: "La justice l'emporte et ne se laisse pas emporter," et ne s'arrêtant devant aucun sacrifice pour la préservation de son honneur, s'était préparée à remplir son devoir envers la patrie.

Les actes de la Russie et les calomnies de cette nation injuste n'ont tourné, grâce à Dieu, qu'à son propre préjudice; elle afficha la prétention d'agir au nom de l'Europe, et sans aucun égard pour les usages des nations civilisées, lors de la déclaration de la guerre, elle fit l'invasion du territoire Ottoman en guise de brigand, sans en donner avis préalable, et ce ne fut qu'après coup qu'elle procéda à la formalité de la déclaration de guerre. Ce procédé a donné une seconde fois l'éveil sur la conduite de la Russie, cependant les populations non-Musulmanes qui ont acquis le titre d'Osmanlis et les différentes communautés Chrétiennes qui jouissent d'une parfaite liberté sous l'ombre de l'Empire Ottoman n'ont reçu qu'avec horreur et dégout la prétention de l'ennemi de vouloir protéger la civilisation et le progrès dont ils jouissent et ils l'ont proclamé à plusieurs reprises.

Le Gouvernement Anglais, après avoir fait tous ses efforts pour préserver la paix, a dû à la fois adopter la politique de la neutralité, et conséquemment comme il était évident qu'il ne pouvait approuver de pareilles ruses et intrigues, nous avons constaté avec joie que dans sa réponse à la Circulaire du Prince Gortchacow il a embrassé d'après son habitude la cause de la justice et a jugé avec équité la conduite des deux parties.

Cette décision du Gouvernement Anglais étant la conséquence naturelle de sentiments de droiture et d'équité dont il est inspiré et la nation Ottomane ne demandant à ses amis autre chose que la justice, cette décision, disons-nous, nous a donné du courage et de la satisfaction, de manière que l'Assemblée des Représentants et tous ceux qui se sacrifient pour leur pays n'ont pu que se sentir redevables d'une grande reconnaissance envers le susdit Gouvernement pour avoir fait acte de justice dans un moment si difficile et délicat.

Par conséquent les Représentants de la nation ont pensé qu'il était de leur principal devoir d'exprimer la reconnaissance de toute la nation Ottomane envers le Gouvernement Anglais pour avoir fait cette fois-ci encore comme toujours un acte de parfaite justice, et ils ont décidé à l'unanimité que les Vice-Présidents de leur

Assemblée portent cette expression de leurs sentiments à son Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre.

Le $\frac{29 \text{ Avril}}{11 \text{ Mai}}$, 1877.

(L.S.) Assemblée des Représentants.

No. 600.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 455.)

Therapia, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kustendji, reporting the state of affairs in the Dobrutcha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 600.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.

Kustendji, May 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to lay before your Excellency a more detailed account of the state of affairs in the Dobrutcha than I have been able to do in my hurried despatch by last Austrian boat, and by telegraph.

Although the Kaïmakam here does not communicate to me officially or privately any information regarding what his actions will be under certain circumstances, yet I have been able from information derived from employés and other Mussulmans, to learn positively that an order was issued, emanating from the Commander-in-chief of the Turkish army to the Governors in the Drobrutcha, to the following effect:—On the appearance of the Russian troops anywhere in the Danube between Rassvat and Sulina, to set fire to all grain depôts, to compel the inhabitants to leave, using force if necessary, to burn all fodder and hay stacked in the villages in the Dobrutcha, and drive away all cattle and sheep, in fact to convert the Dobrutcha into a desert. This order caused great excitement and discontent, so that, fearing a rising of the population, the Kaïmakams were instructed to attempt to quiet the people, and further told not to carry out their orders except at the last moment. The grain stores are so mixed up in their towns with the houses, that burning the former would entail the destruction of the latter; the same with the villages. Some Russian troops having been seen opposite Hirsova, the people were ordered to leave, which they did, closing their shops and stores, and consigning them to the care of the Military Commandant.

Immediately after the people left the shops and stores were opened and rifled by the soldiers and Mustafiz.

A great many villages in the Drobrutcha are quite deserted, the Turkish inhabitants flying for fear of Russians, the Christians for fear of Tartars and Circassians, who have been pillaging the whole country to within a short distance of Kustendji. The local authority here is nil, and the Kaïmakam has had to request the Christian and Tartar population to organize armed bands to patrol the town and defend it, if necessary, from any marauding bands from without; but it may be said of the Tartars, "quis custodiat ipsos custodes," as they are more than likely to join any lawless bands from without in acts of pillage and bloodshed. The Turks here who can afford it are leaving by steamers, or sailing ships, talking openly of the suicidal folly of their Government.

The 4,000 regular troops and Nizam stationed at Tchernavoda and Hirsova, forming the whole regular force in the Dobrutcha, will retreat on Silistria on the appearance of the Russians, and the Drobrutcha will be left to the mercy of bands of Tartars and Circassians.

Bulgarian and Moldave peasants are daily bringing in their produce for sale, and if not able to dispose of cattle and carts they abandon them and fly the country.

The reason given to the Turkish inhabitants for the order about burning depôts and villages was a very transparent and silly one, of enticing the Russians into the Drobrutcha and then to cut off their retreat and starve them; but this would not go down even with the Turks, who saw in it nothing but a trick of the Commander-in-chief to hide his own weakness. The Kaïmakam here is also strangely vacillating and uncertain, as if he were in receipt of contradictory orders, one day telling the inhabitants to leave, the next day trying to reassure them, &c.; so that all order has ceased, and unnecessary panic and fear reigns in the town, a state of things which at any moment may be taken advantage of by ill-disposed individuals for lawless purposes. For the above-stated reasons, and there being here many English families and much English property, I considered it absolutely necessary to apply to your Excellency for a British war-ship for the protection of British lives and interests, and I am certain that her mere presence here will prevent any attempt at rising on the part of the low population, or any attempt at pillaging and bloodshed by any lawless bands from the country. Already the mere report of the anticipated arrival of a British war-ship has had a good effect, and several Turks, who hold property here told me that if a British ship came they would feel more secure.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. SANKEY.

No. 601.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 456.)

Therapia, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 432 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to inclose copies of reports from the British Vice-Consuls at Philippopoli, Adrianople, Enos, and Gallipoli, and from the Consular Agent at Rodosto upon the food supplies in their respective districts. These reports have been forwarded to me by Mr. Consul Blunt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 601.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir,

Philippopolis, May 9, 1877.

IT may be right for me to add to the information I have forwarded regarding the food supplies in this district and the adjoining districts of Samakow and Sofia are almost as rich in this respect, if not more so. Large quantities of grain are yearly exported thence; while it is calculated that about 400,000 sheep reared there annually pass through this sandjak on their way to Constantinople. Horned cattle in these districts are also abundant and cheap. The events of last year may have diminished the stock of cattle and production of grain, but the supplies still remaining must undoubtedly still be considerable. As regards horned cattle, working oxen have to my certain knowledge been bought this winter in the neighbourhood of Sofia at about 700 piastres, or less than 6*l.* per pair, and this has been the average price during the last few years.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 601.

Vice-Consul Rossy to Consul Blunt.

(Extrait.)

Enos, le 7 Mai, 1877.

POUR ce qui concerne les céréales je suis très fâché de déclarer que la récolte a été très pauvre l'année passée et que les cultivateurs ont beaucoup souffert. Non seulement la récolte a-t-elle été insuffisante pour leur nourriture mais la semaille pour la saison leur faisait défaut. Le Gouvernement cependant est venu à l'aide des paysans; et ceux-ci ont profité de ce secours pour pourvoir aux besoins tant de la semaille que de leur propre subsistance. Au reste, par suite des dernières pluies les champs sont en ce moment dans d'excellentes conditions et promettent une récolte

abondante ; et vu la saison favorable nous espérons que pour l'année actuelle la récolte dépassera deux millions de kilos.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 601.

Vice-Consul Adoni to Consul Blunt.

Gallipoli, le 7 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul,

LES produits en céréales du Sandjak de Gallipoli pendant l'année 1876, qui a donné une récolte plutôt mauvaise, ont été les suivants :—

Savoir—	Kilets.
Blé	613,570
Maïs	578,000
Orge	387,330
Seigle	105,800
Avoine	80,330

A l'exception du district de Ghimmurdgina, qui est pourvu de blé de maïs, les autres districts se trouvent dans le besoin et surtout celui de Charkeui. Aucun d'eux n'est pourvu pour faire face aux besoins locaux jusqu'aux nouvelles récoltes. Depuis longtemps déjà le district de Charkeui se trouvent dans le besoin et était fourni par Gallipoli. Je crois que la municipalité demandera la prohibition de l'exportation dans le courant de la semaine.

Quant aux nouvelles récoltes elles se présentent sous le plus bel aspect.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) A. ADONI.

Inclosure 4 in No. 601.

M. Dussi to Consul Blunt.

Rodosto, May 7, 1877.

(Extrait.)

JE regrette de ne pouvoir vous donner même approximativement la quantité de blés, orges, &c., qui se trouve dans ce sandjak.

Les orges peuvent suffire aux besoins locaux. Quant aux blés, maïs, &c., il y a longtemps qu'on en importe de Constantinople et d'ailleurs, la récolte 1876 ayant complètement manquée.

Ce-ci ne serait pas arrivé si le Gouvernement aurait interdit cette année l'exportation de 110,000 kilogs. provenant des années 1874-75.

La nouvelle récolte quant à présent se présente sous de bons auspices.

Inclosure 5 in No. 601.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, May 9, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency, inclosed, Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis' report upon the supplies which the province—that is to say, the Sandjak proper of Adrianople—would be likely to afford to an invading army.

The principal landowners tell me that there is yet plenty of wheat and barley in the grain-producing districts of Adrianople, and that these districts contain an ample provision of hay and straw.

The crops are in excellent condition, and promise an abundant harvest.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

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* 8 kilog. equal to 1 imperial quarter.

Inclosure 6 in No. 601.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Adrianople, May 8*, 1877.

I BEG to submit that it is extremely difficult to draw any conclusions on which it would be safe to place much reliance as to the supplies of grain on hand in this sandjak at the present date.

Corn-dealers and others interested in the grain trade, and who are in a position to be able to form an opinion on the subject, seem confident, nevertheless, that the surplus crop of last year, notwithstanding local consumption and the recent exportations, is still considerable, and more than sufficient for all requirements until the new harvest, which promises to be over the average yield.

From inquiries made in official quarters I learn, though I do not vouch for the figures, that there are at this moment some 300,000 Constantinople "kilés," equal to 37,500 imperial quarters of corn, in Government warehouses in this sandjak; and one of the principal corn-dealers has assured me that, if necessary, he could, within a couple of days, secure upwards of 500,000 "kilés," or 62,500 quarters, of grain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

No. 602.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 457.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May 15*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Smyrna, forwarding a collective letter addressed by the Consular Body of that town to Sabri Pasha, the Governor-General, thanking him for his energy in securing public tranquillity, and of his Excellency's reply thereto.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 602.

Acting Consul Joly to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Smyrna, May 8*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter which, at a meeting of the Consular Body held on the 20th ultimo, was addressed to his Excellency Sabri Pasha to thank him for his unceasing efforts in taking measures for the public security since his arrival at this town as Governor-General.

I also inclose copy of his Excellency's reply thereto, and avail myself of this opportunity to state to your Excellency that, during the last eight months that Sabri Pasha has been Governor-General in this city, he has given general satisfaction.

I have, &c.

(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 602.

The Foreign Consuls at Smyrna to Sabri Pasha.

M. le Gouverneur-Général, *Smyrne, le 20 Avril*, 1877.

LE Corps Consulaire a voulu, dans la séance qu'il a tenue aujourd'hui, remercier votre Excellence de tous les efforts couronnés de succès que vous avez faits depuis votre arrivée à Smyrne pour améliorer le corps de police et assurer ainsi la tranquillité publique. Il sera toujours prêt à vous seconder, M. le Gouverneur-Général, et à vous prêter son concours pour faciliter l'accomplissement de la tâche méritoire que vous avez entreprise.

Veuillez, &c.

Inclosure 3 in No. 602.

Sabri Pasha to the Foreign Consuls at Smyrna.

M. le Consul-Général, *Smyrne, le 2 Mai*, 1877.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir la note collective en date du 29 Avril que vous m'avez remise avec vos honorables collègues d'Autriche-Hongrie et de Perse, et par laquelle l'honorable Corps Consulaire veut bien me remercier de mes efforts depuis mon arrivée à Smyrne pour améliorer la police et assurer la tranquillité publique; il ajoute qu'il sera toujours prêt à me seconder et à prêter son concours pour me faciliter l'accomplissement de la tâche méritoire que j'ai entreprise.

Je suis, M. le Consul-Général, on ne peut plus sensible aux sentiments que l'honorable Corps Consulaire veut bien m'exprimer. En donnant ma plus sérieuse attention au double objet dont il s'agit, je n'ai fait que remplir mon devoir et obéir aux ordres de la Sublime Porte, qui sont l'expression de la volonté de Sa Majesté Impériale, mon auguste Souverain.

Je remercie à mon tour l'honorable Corps Consulaire du concours qu'il me promet et dont j'ai eu jusqu'à présent des preuves nombreuses, pour faciliter ma tâche. J'en ferai part à mon Gouvernement, et il sera heureux d'apprendre l'unanimité de vue qui existe à Smyrne au sujet d'une question d'intérêt général à laquelle elle s'intéresse vivement.

Veuillez, M. le Consul-Général, donner communication de cette lettre à tous vos honorables collègues, et agréer, &c.

(Signé) SABRI.

No. 603.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 456.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May* 15, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copies of despatches I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adrianople, respecting the reading of the Firman announcing the declaration of war and the state of public security in the province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 603.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, May* 11, 1877.

I BEG leave to submit to your Excellency the inclosed paper, being the substance, as far as I could gather, of the Firman which was publicly read yesterday at the konak with reference to the war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 603.

Substance of the Firman read publicly at Adrianople.

HIS Majesty the Sultan adds that for about two years our country has been in a state of great panic caused by foreign intrigues, in consequence of which we laboured a long while not to disturb the peace of the world; but in order to maintain our independence we are now compelled to have recourse to the sword unwillingly, because the old enemy and adversary of our country threatens our national integrity. In order to preserve our country I feel heartily sincere towards all communities without distinction of race or nationality, and I desire that everybody should exert himself to aid the country in the hour of need and peril, and that you, my Wali, must instruct all Mutessarifs, Kaïmakams, and Mudirs, to maintain feelings of cordiality and fraternity towards all races our subjects, without distinction of nationality, as well as towards all foreigners the subjects of friendly Powers.

Inclosure 3 in No. 603.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, May* 11, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that the public tranquillity in this province continues undisturbed, and that the promptness and activity of Aali Pasha, the Governor-General, in pursuing and arresting disorderly characters, has certainly contributed to lessen the number of depredations committed by the Circassians, as no fresh disturbances have been reported for some time.

Kerk Kelissi having been the scene of some disorderly Turks, and as some dozen Russian subjects reside there, I am going to visit the place to investigate the outrages complained of, and to ascertain if there is any foundation for the suspicions entertained by people here that there are emissaries abroad who are instigating these acts with the view to excite the fanaticism of the Turks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

No. 604.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 459.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May* 16, 1877.

MONSIGNOR ANTHEMOS, the Bulgarian Exarch at Constantinople, was suspected by the Porte of having been employed by Russia in bringing about the Bulgarian insurrection last year. He has just been deposed by the Bulgarian notables at the instigation, it is supposed, of the Turkish Government, but, it would appear, in a legal and regular manner. His removal has caused some sensation here, and would, no doubt, have been resisted by the Russian Government, had not the war broken out. I have requested Mr. Sandison to draw up a Memorandum with reference to the subject, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose. Joseph Effendi, the Metropolitan of Loftché, who has been elected in the place of Monsignor Anthemos, is well spoken of, and is said to be opposed to Russia and friendly to the Porte. But some persons believe that he will be induced before long to resign in consequence of the threats of Russian agents that, in the event of the success of Russia in the war, he will be punished for accepting the Exarchate under present circumstances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 604.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, May* 14, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report the appointment of Joseph Effendi, Metropolitan of Loftché, as the new Bulgarian Exarch at Constantinople in the room of Monsignor Anthemos, whom the Porte has longed to see superseded as a Prelate who was generally thought to be an intriguing Russian partizan. There is, therefore, reason to believe that the Porte has secretly been instrumental in his removal; but as far as my information goes there seems to have been no irregularity committed on its part, either in recalling his Bérat or in the nomination of his successor, which took place according to established customs and regulations, of which the following are the principal provisions:—

A kind of National Council being convened at Constantinople, composed of Bulgarian Bishops and of the leading members of the community, a list of candidates for the vacant Exarchate is made out and presented by it to the Porte, which has the right to cancel a limited number of names, three in all, that may appear objectionable

to it. This done, the list with the remaining names is returned to the Council, which selects from it the candidate it pleases.

These formalities were fulfilled on this late occasion, and Joseph Effendi was accordingly recognized by Imperial Iradé as the newly-elected Bulgarian Exarch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 605.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 460.)
Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 436 of the 11th instant, containing translation of an article published in the Turkish paper called the "Paket," inciting the Mahommedans against Christians, and have the honour to state that the editor of that journal has received a severe warning and reprimand from the Government, and that articles have been inserted by their direction in other newspapers in a sense entirely opposite to that in the "Paket."

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 606.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 461.)
Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that Mr. Valentine Baker has now received the rank of Siva, or General of Brigade in the Turkish service, and has, consequently, the title of Pasha. He will be under the orders of the Minister of Police, and will be charged with the reorganization of the gendarmerie or mounted police. His contract with the Porte was signed last Thursday. Baker Pasha will receive 200 Turkish liras a month (about 2,000*l.* a year), and his engagement is for three years, commencing from the 23rd ultimo. He will have several English officers under him as inspectors of districts and for other purposes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD

No. 607.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 463.)
Therapia, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

HAVING learnt that the Sultan had been induced by persons in the palace to hesitate about granting an amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians, I applied for and obtained to-day a private audience of His Majesty. The Sultan gave me his word that the amnesty should be granted, with certain exceptions, which are to be made on an understanding with me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 608.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 464. Confidential.)
Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

NOTWITHSTANDING the distinct promises repeatedly given to me by the Grand Vizier and by Safvet Pasha (as reported to your Lordship) that a full amnesty would be immediately granted to the Bulgarian Christians imprisoned on the charge of

complicity in the attempted insurrection of last year in Bulgaria, the Sultan's Iradé or Imperial order to that effect did not appear. The Grand Vizier had informed me last Wednesday that His Majesty had already signed it, and that it would be issued on the following day. I subsequently learnt that Rediff Pasha, the Minister of War, and Mahmoud Damat Pasha, were using their influence to induce His Majesty to refuse it. The Sultan sent Saïd Pasha, the head of his military household, to see me last Saturday on the subject. From the language of his Excellency, who spoke of the danger which His Majesty apprehended in case these Bulgarians, many of whom were known to be Russian agents, were released before the end of the war, I saw that the Sultan was evidently hesitating. I accordingly availed myself of an invitation which His Majesty had graciously given me to visit his gardens with him, to propose, through Saïd Pasha, that I should wait upon him on the following Tuesday. To this he at once agreed. It was my determination to speak openly to His Majesty on the subject of the amnesty.

I was accordingly received privately by the Sultan. Availing myself of an opening afforded to me by His Majesty when expressing his intention to protect his Christian subjects, and to make no difference between them and the Mussulmans, I observed that I hoped His Majesty would give a proof of his justice and humanity by granting an amnesty to the Bulgarian Christians, who were still in prison charged with political offences. I had received, I said, distinct assurances from the Grand Vizier that they should be pardoned, and I deeply regretted to find that unexpected difficulties had been placed in the way of a measure which would, I was convinced, produce a very favourable impression both upon public opinion in England and upon the Christian populations of the Empire, which, at this moment, was a matter of the greatest importance. I dwelt upon the disappointment that would be felt by Her Majesty's Government if the amnesty, which I had led them to believe was about to be issued immediately, was now withheld, and urged him, in earnest language, to grant it without delay.

The Sultan replied that before the war broke out he had determined to grant a general amnesty to the Bulgarians concerned in the events of last year. But now that he was engaged in hostilities with Russia, how could he set at liberty, and allow to return to their homes, a number of men who were known to be Russian agents, and who would avail themselves of their freedom to incite the Bulgarian population to rebel against his authority? That they would do so no one could doubt. There would be fresh murders of Mussulmans, and fresh acts of retaliation. "Mr. Gladstone," His Majesty said, "would find new materials for denouncing the Turks and their rule, and for rousing the indignation of the English people against them." He could not be fairly asked, he added, to permit conspirators against his throne, and persons guilty of grave crimes for which they had been justly condemned, to go freely abroad. He was ready as soon as the war was over, to grant a full and complete amnesty, but he could not promise to do so before.

It was evident that the Sultan's fears had been successfully worked upon, and that in opposition to the advice of the Grand Vizier, he had been prevailed upon to refuse the amnesty. I used all the arguments that I could command to shake his resolution; I said that I did not ask His Majesty to release dangerous men unconditionally. No one could expect him to do so. If there were any such among those who were imprisoned, I saw no objection to measures being taken to place them under proper surveillance. But the great majority of those still in confinement were, I was assured, either innocent men, or were charged with insignificant political offences. No serious danger could be apprehended from them. Even, I said, if their release did threaten some inconvenience and trouble, more would result from their being detained in prison, as the impression would be confirmed in England that these men were unjustly dealt with, whilst Mahomedans, who were proved guilty of grave crimes had remained unpunished. Nothing could be more fatal, I added, to the interests of Turkey, and the reputation of her Government, than the existence of such a conviction. It was, consequently, of the greatest importance that it should be removed at once by the issue of the amnesty.

The Sultan, after arguing the question for some time with great calmness and intelligence, asked me whether I would consent that, if he granted an amnesty, some exceptions should be made with respect to persons who had been proved guilty of grave crimes, and to those whose unconditional release would be really dangerous to public peace and order.

I said that I could not in justice ask that such men as His Majesty described should be set at liberty without some precautions being adopted with regard to them.

But great care should be taken not to confound the innocent with the guilty, and not to render the amnesty nugatory, by excluding from it a large number of persons, or by placing those against whom there were no well-founded suspicions under unnecessary restraint. I ventured to suggest that I should name a confidential agent, who would come to an understanding with those charged with putting the amnesty into execution, as to the persons who might be excepted from it, or ought for the public safety to be placed under "surveillance" if released.

The Sultan answered, that he was willing to agree to what I proposed, and he gave me his royal word, that upon these conditions he would at once grant the amnesty. He was not quite certain, he said, that the step he was about to take was free from danger; but he would run the risk in order to show his deference to the wishes of the Queen and of Her Majesty's Government, to whom he owed so much, and who had given him so many proofs of friendship, and because, His Majesty was good enough to add, he was anxious to satisfy me.

I thanked His Majesty in the name of the Queen and Her Majesty's Government.

I then proposed to His Majesty that I should name Mr. Blunt, who was known to him by reputation, and whose impartiality could not be doubted, to communicate with the persons appointed to carry out the amnesty. To this suggestion he at once agreed.

I have given but an outline of a conversation which lasted for nearly an hour, as it was with no little difficulty that I succeeded in removing from the Sultan's mind the objections to the amnesty, which, I had reason to know, had been suggested to him by Mahmoud Damat Pasha and the Minister of War. As I was leaving the grounds, His Majesty sent a man on horseback to Saïd Pasha, by whom I was accompanied, to tell his Excellency to request me to write him a private letter to the effect, that I did not object to the amnesty not being extended to persons found guilty of grave crimes, and only conditionally to those who were known to be dangerous characters. This I promised to do according to the construction that I had placed upon His Majesty's promise.

I have no doubt that the request was made in order that the Sultan might justify himself to Redif and Mahmoud Damat Pashas for what he had done.

I have telegraphed to Mr. Blunt to come to Constantinople, in order that he may communicate with Saïd Pasha, and obtain from Mr. Baring such information as will enable him to execute the mission which I shall intrust to him, and which the Sultan begged me to consider as strictly secret.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 609.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 465.)
Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 11th instant, and to my telegram of the 14th instant, respecting the state of affairs at Jerusalem, I have been informed that the Porte has received intelligence that some companies of Redifs had been sent against the Bedouins in the Cazas of Selt and Ramli. The Muchir of the 5th army corps, who supplies this information, adds that the reports which were spread about the condition of the province are without foundation, and originated in the despatch of troops mentioned above; the authorities were doing all in their power to maintain order, and had sufficient troops for the purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 610.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 466.)
Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a Memorandum on the state of the district of Toultcha, which has been handed to

me by Mr. Sandison, to whom it was furnished by a person acquainted with that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 610.

Memorandum.

LE Gouvernement a ordonné aux habitants de s'éloigner du Sandjak de Toultcha. Les Turcs se sont enfuis en emportant tout ce qu'ils pouvaient prendre et en abandonnant leurs biens. Les Bulgares affluent de toutes côtés dans la ville de Toultcha, et les jeunes gens passent clandestinement à l'armée Russe qui se trouve en face.

Les Circassiens qui habitent les alentours de Toultcha ont demandés du Gouvernement des officiers pour combattre contre l'ennemi déclarant qu'ils n'abandonneraient d'aucune façon ces contrées. Le Gouvernement refusa d'accepter leur demande et ceux-ci errent armés çà et là; il y a fort à craindre qu'ils ne se livrent à des violences sur le petit nombre de Bulgares qui restent encore dans la province de Babadagh et que n'ayons ainsi de nouveaux massacres.

2. Les Bulgares ont caché toutes leurs voitures, comme cela a eu lieu du reste lors de la guerre de Crimée, quand les forces alliés ont débarqués à Kustendji, et nul ne peut transporter la moindre des choses.

3. Dans le Sandjak de Toultcha, en comprenant Kustendji il se trouve plus de 500,000 kilogs. du blé, dont le Gouvernement a depuis peu défendu l'exportation. Mais les Gouverneurs de Kustendji et de Toultcha, ainsi que les autres Gouvernements de ces parages de caractère vénal, s'entendent ouvertement avec les négociants et permettent l'exportation sous le prétexte que les négociants ont des contrats antérieurs à la date de prohibition. Si ces céréales continuent à rester ainsi ici et que les Russes occupent ces lieux, nul doute qu'ils ne trouveraient des provisions très abondantes.

Pour notre part nous ajouterons aux remarques que nous venons d'exposer que quoique dans plusieurs endroits de Constantinople on ait planté des drapeaux Turcs, portant aussi le symbole de la rédemption, pourtant un infiniment petit nombre de volontaires Chrétiens se présentent à l'inscription.

Nous croyons qu'une des causes principales doit être attribuée au manque complet d'égards et de soins qu'on a eu pour eux lors de la dernière guerre de Servie.

L'état d'anguise et d'inquiétude des Turcs augmente; ils ont puisé un peu de consolation dans la dernière circulaire du Comte Derby. Le Gouvernement prend les plus grandes précautions pour qu'il n'arrive aucun trouble, en engageant constamment les Musulmans à la tranquillité.

Un fait digne de remarque c'est l'irritation des Grecques contre les Russes qui gagne tous les jours du terrain. Les Grecs se conseillent mutuellement en se promettant de rester spectateurs calmes et impassibles des événements qui se dévoulent devant leurs yeux et de ne favoriser en aucune façon les menées Panslavistes, ce qui, au cas contraire, déplairait considérablement à l'Angleterre, de qui ils ont à espérer beaucoup. Il a été même observé à ce sujet que l'article de fond d'hier du "Néologos," qui est considéré comme journal national, parle constamment sur ce sujet et engage les Grecs à abstenir complètement de tout mouvement tout en suivant les conseils de l'Angleterre. Une petite fraction, qui existait et qui semblait recevoir toutes ces inspirations de feu le Consul Axelos et d'Ignatieff, paraît avoir déjà passé à l'état de mythe.

Constantinople, le 12 *Mai*, 1877.

P.S.—A l'heure qu'il est on a fait répandre le bruit qu'un commencement d'insurrection a eu lieu en Epire et Thessalie. Le Gouvernement a proposé hier à la Compagnie de Frassinat de faire transporter d'armes à Volo, ce que la susdite Compagnie n'a pas accepté; on dit que le Gouvernement se prépare pour l'envoi d'armes par ses propres bateaux.

On dit aussi que plusieurs Turcs, et entre autres Mehmet Ruchdi Pasha, Monténégrin, veuillent faciliter le retour de Midhat Pacha, dont la partie se fortifie de jour en jour, mais d'autres Turcs conseillent la tranquillité. Les Turcs ne sont pas contents de Mahmoud Pacha, Damat, et du Serasker.

Le plaisir des Bulgares pour les progrès des Russes s'aggrandie de jour en jour.

No. 611.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 467. Confidential.)

Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch, Secret, No. 446 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum which I have just received from Mr. Dragoman Mariniteh of a conversation with the Minister of Marine, Raouf Pasha, as to the contemplated landing of Circassians on the eastern coast of the Black Sea.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 611.

Memorandum.

LE Ministre de la Marine, que j'ai visité ce matin, m'a fourni les renseignements complémentaires suivants :—

L'Amiral Hussein Pacha prendra le commandement de l'escadre qui doit se trouver dans les eaux de la Crête pour surveiller les mouvements de la Grèce. Cette flotte se compose de 15 navires de guerre dont plusieurs cuirassés des plus grands. Elle quittera Constantinople Jeudi prochain.

La flotte qui est appelée à opérer dans la Mer Noire est placée sous le commandement de l'Amiral Hobart Pacha. Elle se compose de 18 navires grands et petits, dont plusieurs cuirassés. Cette escadre prendra la mer dans quelques jours.

Le Gouvernement dispose déjà de près de 15,000 Circassiens et de Crimli (originaires de la Crimée) qu'il a l'intention de faire débarquer sur un ou plusieurs points du littoral Russe de la Mer Noire pour tâcher de surprendre le point faible et faire brèche.

Dix bataillons de troupes vont être expédiées à Erzeroum.

(Signé) MARINITCH.

Le 15 *Mai*, 1877.

P.S.—Il paraît que les Circassiens ont refusé de prêter leurs services au Gouvernement disant qu'ils n'avaient pas été récompensés pour ceux qu'ils avaient rendus durant la guerre Turco-Serbe. C'est surtout sur les instances de Raouf Pacha, qui est d'origine Circassienne, qu'ils se sont décidés à se rendre sur le théâtre de la guerre. Le Sultan va en décorer plusieurs d'entr'eux.

No. 612.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 468.)

Therapia, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Porte has received information that Soukoum Kalé has been bombarded and captured, and that the Mussulman population in the district has risen against the Russian authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 613.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 25.)

(No. 469. Secret.)

Therapia, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WHEN I had the honour of seeing the Sultan on my arrival here, he invited me to walk some day with him in his garden. As I was very desirous of speaking to His Majesty about the amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians, and upon other matters of

importance, I requested Saïd Pasha last week to ask His Majesty whether he would now permit me to avail myself of his invitation. His Majesty replied at once that he should be happy to see me; and he was good enough to propose that I should bring Mrs. Layard with me. Yesterday (Tuesday) was named for our visit.

We accordingly went at the hour appointed to the small Palace of Zeldir, built by Sultan Abdul Aziz, on a hill overlooking the Bosphorus. We were received by Saïd Pasha.

After his Excellency had shown us over a part of the grounds, I asked him when we were to see His Majesty. He appeared somewhat embarrassed, and replied that, unfortunately, the Sultan had passed a bad night, and had retired to the harem so unwell that he would not be able to receive us.

I had learnt that the Minister of War and Mahmoud Damet Pasha were in the Palace, and I suspected at once that there was some intrigue to prevent my seeing His Majesty. I observed to Saïd Pasha that, although the gardens were no doubt very beautiful, I had not come to see them, but the Sultan; and that, if I could not have the honour of waiting upon His Majesty to-day, I had to request that he would ascertain before I left the grounds when His Majesty would receive me, otherwise I should ask formally for an audience.

Saïd Pasha, who was evidently much put out by what had occurred, sent an attendant to the Bash-Mabegingi (the superintendent of His Majesty's household) with orders that he should, without speaking first to any one, inform the Sultan that the English Ambassador had come by appointment, and was waiting to see His Majesty.

The attendant soon returned with a very gracious message from the Sultan.

He begged Mrs. Layard and myself to take some refreshment in one of the "kiosks," where he would shortly join us. We went accordingly to a small building of marble, with pleasant reservoirs and fountains in the entrance-hall, where the Sultan is accustomed to pass a good deal of his time in summer.

His Majesty soon arrived. He received us in an upper room, commanding one of the most beautiful prospects in the world, overlooking the city, the Golden Horn, the entrance of the Bosphorus, and the Sea of Marmora, with Mount Olympus in the background. His Majesty advanced to the door to meet us, and requested Mrs. Layard and myself, and Saïd Pasha, who acted as interpreter, to be seated.

After addressing some kind and courteous words to Mrs. Layard, he said to me that he was very glad of the opportunity of repeating to me himself how deeply grateful he was to the Queen and Her Majesty's Government for your Lordship's reply to Prince Gortchakow's circular. England, after all, he observed, was the only friend that Turkey could rely on, and she would treat her with justice and impartiality. He grieved more than he could tell me, he added, that events for which he could not be held responsible had produced an estrangement between the two countries, and no sacrifice would be wanting on his part to remove it. He had been the guest of the Queen, and he should never forget the hospitality the late Sultan and himself had experienced from Her Majesty and the English people. He spoke with much real feeling.

The Sultan looked anxious and careworn. I expressed my regret to learn that he was suffering, and my earnest hope that he would take care of his health, and not overtax his strength.

He replied that he had not slept for many nights, and that the anxiety which he had to undergo was almost more than he could endure. "You see the weight that our hawals (porters) carry. The burden that I have on my shoulders is greater than any of them could bear."

His Majesty spoke at some length about the war. He declared that it was an unjust and unprovoked war, and that no possible concession that he could have made would, it was now proved, have prevented Russia from waging it. She had violated every law, and whilst professing friendship for Turkey, had been for years making her preparations for carrying out her designs, which were to lead to the destruction of the Turkish Empire.

His Majesty complained that he had been treated unjustly by Europe; that whilst Russia was allowed to help Servia, to openly excite his subjects to rebellion through her Ambassador and other Agents, and to adopt, without disguise, measures for carrying on a great war when it suited her purpose to declare it, Turkey had been restrained by Europe from adopting those measures which were absolutely essential for her defence. He alluded with some bitterness to the conduct of Roumania, whose rights and privileges, guaranteed by Treaty, he had been, he said, so anxious to

respect, that he had refused to take steps on her territory which might have enabled him to resist the advance of the Russians, whilst she was publicly aiding and abetting his enemy, with whom she had actually entered into an offensive Treaty against Turkey.

"We are accused by Europe," His Majesty said, "of being savages and fanatics. We are not the savages who have brought on a dreadful war which will lead to the sacrifice of innumerable human lives; nor are we the fanatics who have incited Greeks, Bulgarians, and Armenians to exterminate those who differ from them in religion. Under the reigns of my forefathers, the various sects, Christian and others, inhabiting the Turkish Empire, were allowed the most complete religious toleration. We have never been accused of religious persecution. Our laws and administration were, no doubt, bad, and Christians were not treated with the justice that they were entitled to, but were placed in an inferior position to the Mussulmans. But it is my determination that this inequality should no longer exist, and it is for this reason that I consented to the Constitution and the Parliament.

"It is my firm desire and intention that all my subjects should enjoy the most complete liberty, and perfect equality before the law."

His Majesty said this with great earnestness and evident sincerity.

I availed myself of the opening that the Sultan had thus given me to introduce the subject of the amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians.

I have in another despatch informed your Lordship of what took place on the subject.

When speaking to the Sultan about the amnesty, I ventured to remark that I feared that a bad influence was sometimes brought to bear upon His Majesty to prevent his carrying out the wise and humane intentions with which he was animated, and doing all that he desired to do for the good of his subjects. I hinted that this influence was dangerous to the country and perhaps even to his throne.

His Majesty understood my meaning at once. He replied, that he was perfectly aware that there were persons who sought to exercise this influence over him, and that they were consequently regarded with suspicion by the country, I might be persuaded, however, that he was not swayed by it. He was even ready to remove those who were supposed to have it. But to do so at the present moment, when he had just entered upon a war, would be to take upon himself an immense responsibility.

If any disaster occurred, he would be accused of having been the cause of it.

However, even now, if I advised the measure as one essential to the public good, he would be prepared to adopt it.

I answered that I could not incur the responsibility of offering any such advice; but I would venture to suggest that the evil might be met to a certain extent, at any rate for the present, by giving the Grand Vizier more support, and by making him solely accountable for the policy of the Government, and enabling him to carry it out. A divided Government was at all times a source of danger. It was especially so during a great national crisis. If the Grand Vizier had colleagues who supported secretly an opposite policy to his own, and who had influence enough to thwart him on all occasions, it was impossible that the Administration could be carried on to the satisfaction or to the safety of the country. If the Grand Vizier was unable to enforce his views or to fulfil his promises, he must lose all his influence, and would consequently be unfit to direct public affairs.

It appeared to me of the utmost importance that whoever was Grand Vizier should have the entire support and confidence of His Majesty, and that no other member of the Ministry should have His Majesty's ear, and be able, by personal or indirect influence, to defeat the avowed policy of the Government. I had every reason to believe that Edhem Pasha was an honourable, able, and trustworthy man; but what he required was the firm support of His Majesty.

The Sultan answered that the Grand Vizier deserved what I had said of him, "but he could not speak; he wanted courage." I remarked that it was for His Majesty to give him courage, and the only way to do so was by showing him that he had his confidence.

After a good deal of conversation on this subject, during which His Majesty asked me many questions about the constitutional relations between the Queen and her Ministers, the Sultan turned to other matters of pressing importance. Alluding to the victory obtained by his troops over the Russians near Batoum, he said, with much feeling, that it was no doubt a success which was encouraging to his army, but that he could not forget that it was obtained at the sacrifice of human life in what

he considered an unjust and unnecessary war, and that he was under no illusions as to its importance.

He was engaged in a struggle with a great Empire, which had resources immeasurably greater than those of Turkey. She had now, through the machinations of her secular enemy, been engaged for two years in a war with Servia and Montenegro, and in putting down insurrections brought about with the express intention of weakening her. She was without money, and could not purchase the supplies and munitions absolutely required for carrying on war. If she could not get it, she would find herself in the end helpless before the enemy. Did I think there was any possibility of raising a loan in England, however small? If the Turkish troops had only arms and ammunition, they would fight to the very last.

I replied that upon this point I could give no opinion or advice. His Majesty could not, I said, look to any help in this matter from Her Majesty's Government. To assist Turkey in obtaining a loan would be a breach of neutrality. I asked His Majesty how long Turkey could carry on the war with the means now at her command. He answered that he believed that money enough could be found for the expenses of about two months. This agrees with what the Minister of Finance told me.

The Sultan then asked me whether Her Majesty's Government could give him any assistance in removing to Constantinople the powerful ironclad which had been built in England for Turkey before the declaration of war, but which was not yet armed. He was afraid, he said, of accepting Hobart Pasha's proposal for bringing her here, lest she should fall into the hands of the Russians. Would there be any impropriety in her accompanying or following any ships of Her Majesty that might be coming to the Mediterranean? They would, at least, be some kind of protection to her. If she were armed, he did not doubt that she would be able to deal with any ship or number of ships that the Russians could now bring against her in that sea. His Majesty also asked me whether he could not purchase arms and ammunition in England and export them to Turkey. He complained that the Russians, since the outbreak of the war, had kept their ships of war in ports of the United States, where, he was informed, they had obtained all the warlike stores that they needed.

I replied to His Majesty that upon these points I could not be expected to offer any opinion.

His Majesty then said that he was convinced that England could not allow the Turkish Empire to be destroyed, and that to prevent such an event, she would come to his assistance, but she might come too late. He had no hope but in her. If she did not help him, God only knew what would happen.

I observed that, if such were His Majesty's convictions and hopes, how necessary it was for his Government to take such measures in the cause of justice and humanity as would satisfy the English people. The Porte, I added, had been warned by Her Majesty's Government that, in consequence of the events of last year, and the indignation they had caused in England, Turkey was not to expect help from her in a war with Russia. Her Majesty's Government had declared that they were determined to maintain the interests of England, but they had gone no farther.

The Sultan repeated that he could not be held responsible for the events to which I had alluded. He had only recently come to the throne; he gave me his royal word that he was desirous of making all such reforms as could contribute to the security of the country and the just and impartial government of all his subjects. But he had not even been allowed the opportunity of putting his intentions into execution. Russia, to prevent his doing so, had waged an unjust war against him, and he was now held responsible for the disorders and bloodshed which were the result of it.

I have only given your Lordship the outline of a most interesting conversation which lasted for two hours, and was sustained by the Sultan with much earnestness and animation, and, at the same time, with the greatest kindness and consideration towards myself, although I ventured to speak to His Majesty with the most perfect frankness.

When we took our leave of His Majesty, he told Mrs. Layard that he hoped she would soon visit his harem, adding, laughing, that I could not be admitted, but that, after he had taken her to the ladies, he should come out and have another talk with me.

The impression conveyed to me by what passed at this remarkable interview is that the Sultan has more decision of character and more firmness than are generally attributed to him; but that he is, at present, timid and alarmed by the fate of his two predecessors.

Persons about him, such as Redif and Mahmoud Damat Pashas, take advantage of his fears to induce him to do that which may be to their own interests, but not, perhaps, to those of his Empire. He seemed to be bowed down by anxiety; and if he continues to devote himself to business as he now does, his health may soon give way. If such should be the case, it would be a real misfortune.

When leaving His Majesty, I observed that the hopes of his country were centred upon him, and that he might earn a glorious name by giving to his Empire good and just government, and by gaining the affections of his subjects of all creeds and races. He seemed pleased with what I said, and I believe that if he were well supported, and had trustworthy, wise, and energetic advisers, he would carry out the good intentions with which, I am convinced, he is animated.

My impression is that if any occurrence should afford a safe opportunity to dismiss Redif and Mahmoud Damat Pashas, he will avail himself of it.

It is absolutely necessary that two men so notoriously ignorant and corrupt, and who have exercised a fatal influence upon the affairs of this country, should be removed from His Majesty's councils.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 614.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 24, 1877, 5·15 P.M.*
(Secret.)

THE Sultan dropped a hint to me this morning that if peace could be made with Montenegro, through the mediation of Her Majesty's Government, he would be prepared, at their suggestion, to make some territorial concession to the Principality, provided that too much were not asked. The proposal could not come from him, he said, but only from Her Majesty's Government.

I told His Majesty that I was afraid the demands of Montenegro, backed by Russia, would now be far greater than anything he could agree to. He begged me to consider what had passed between us as most secret.

No. 615.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

Scutari, May 24, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TELEGRAPH office refuses to receive telegrams for Embassy and places in Turkey except in Turkish language.

No. 616.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 25, 1877, 9·30 A.M.*

PORTE did not give an actual promise to allow English tugs and lighters to ascend the Danube into Austrian waters, but, as I stated in my telegram of the 11th instant, made it conditional on approval of Commander-in-chief: he considered the proposal open to objection, and permission was refused. I have pressed the Porte on the subject, but without result. Porte states that permission was about to be given to permit these vessels to ascend above Tinok, when is learnt that eight Austrian vessels had been sold to the Russians, and orders had been given to fire upon them and all other vessels that leave their present anchorage, to prevent the enemy from buying or taking them. Similar communication has been made to Austrian Ambassador.

No. 617.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Constantinople, May 25, 1877, 3 20 P.M.*

HOBART PASHA left last night for the Black Sea. I have reason to suspect that he meditates an attack upon Odessa with the Turkish fleet.

No. 618.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, May 25, 1877, noon.*

NOT likely that Servia of her own accord should renew hostilities, but it is expected here that the Principality will be ere long dragged into the war by Russia, and, consequently, preparations are quietly and imperceptibly going on.

The only apparent security against such a contingency are the objections to such a course being adopted by the Russian Government supposed to be entertained by Austria; but unless these take more decisive form than indications hitherto given here, and while it is yet time, it may be too late. Opinion gaining ground here both that Austrian menaces may be disregarded, and that the Slavonic influence on the Emperor Alexander favourable to Servian co-operation is increasing.

Sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

No. 619.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 25, 1877, 4·30 P.M.*

CONSUL GREEN telegraphs that telegraph office refuses to receive telegrams for Embassy and places in Turkey except in Turkish language.

Request Turkish Government to rescind this order so far as telegrams from Her Majesty's Consular Agents in Turkey are concerned.

No. 620.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 25, 6·45 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 25, 1877, 3·15 P.M.*

YESTERDAY a number of Softas went to the Parliament House and demanded immediate dismissal of Minister of War and Sultan's brother-in-law. Deputation admitted to Chamber of Deputies and President communicated their demand to the Grand Vizier, who has refused to comply and a state of siege is proclaimed. I have urgently represented to His Highness the great importance of avoiding the application of this measure to foreigners, and he has promised me that orders shall be given to the authorities not to molest them in any way.

(Most Confidential.)

Grand Vizier states, and I believe with some reason, that demonstration of yesterday was brought about by Mr. Butler Johnstone, who by his money and intrigues is doing a great deal of mischief. It is most unfortunate that it should have taken place, as the Sultan was about to dismiss both Ministers, and now he cannot yield to intimidation

No. 621.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

Bagdad, April 24, 1877.

My Lord,

THERE has been an assemblage of troops at Kermanshah in Persia, about seventy miles from the Turkish frontier post of Kanikiso. Every year this assemblage takes place with a view, as is always stated, of enabling the Governor to collect the revenue of the Persian district of Zaab. This year an additional force of 4 regiments of infantry and 6 guns and 400 horsemen have been sent from Tehran, and it is said the Governor of Kermanshah had orders to proceed to Zaab, which is close to the Turkish frontier, when a second order from Tehran caused him to delay his departure.

Altogether there are 10 regiments of infantry and 18 guns at Kermanshah, and by the last accounts the troops were encamped outside the town drilling, and the Governor of Kermanshah, an uncle of the Shah of Persia, was encamped with them. The Kurdish militia has been sent to Senendij; a Colonel of Engineers belonging to the Russian army is said to be at Kermanshah. I shall inquire into the truth of this report.

There being a Minister of Her Majesty at Tehran, this office does not usually report the movement of troops in Persia; but as there is some unusual excitement going on at this place I think it advisable to mention the above details.

There is a force under a Persian Shahzadah at Failerah, near Mahomerah, on the Shat-el-Arab.

Occasional forays occur on the part of the Persians into Turkish Arabia, which have hitherto been amicably adjusted between the two Governments. The Persian "Elchee" accredited to Baghdad is now absent on an inquiry regarding a raid that has recently occurred.

There has been considerable uneasiness on the part of the authorities in this province, as it is generally believed that the Persian Government desires to recover its sway over this country, as it contains the Shia shrines of Kerbella and Nejjeff, and it is supposed that a secret Treaty exists between the Russians and the Persians on this head. These shrines are reputed to contain a vast amount of treasure, and the province is filled with Mussulmans of the Shia sect.

While I feel assured that the policy pursued by the Persian Court regarding this border can to a certain extent be guided by the views expressed by the English Government, still that Court will only act in consonance with those views so long as it is supposed that the English Government is supporting Turkey. Therefore, if the Russians become victorious in their first conflicts with the Turks in Asia, Persia will change her policy and become aggressive in this direction, and this flank of India will be menaced without any warning.

I must confess that I have an idea that Russia has wider views and a more extended scheme of action than is generally supposed. It is not at all impossible that she may dispatch a corps d'armée to Diarbekir or Mosul, whilst she is carrying on her attacks on Kars and Erzeroum, and thus possess herself of the waterway of the Tigris down which she can float her materials of war to this place.

The road from Kars to Diarbekir is practicable and supplies are procurable, and nothing would distract the Mussulman world so much as the capture of Baghdad, the centre of Islam and the city of the Caliphs. That the Russians have this scheme sketched out I feel convinced, and the *dénouement* may be confidently awaited. After debouching at Diarbekir the River Tigris offers such an easy means of reaching the heart of this country, and there is no force worth speaking of to oppose them. Another route by which this centre can be approached is viâ Tabriz.

There is a fierce fanatical spirit abroad amongst the Mussulman population, and telegraphic messages are greatly retarded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. NIXON.

No. 622.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 15. Political.)

My Lord,

Aleppo, May 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a copy of my despatch of to-day's date with two inclosures, reporting to Mr. Layard that I have investigated at Alexandretta the state of that town, and found it to be as represented by the Acting Vice-Consul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 622.

Consul Skene to Mr. Layard.

Sir,

Aleppo, May 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a report and a petition which I have received from the Acting Vice-Consul at Alexandretta. Having had an opportunity of personally investigating the circumstances reported by him, I have no hesitation in confirming his statements. If a man-of-war should be stationed at Alexandretta, it might also be of great advantage to Mersyna by occasionally showing the flag there, as both towns are exposed to danger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 622.

Vice-Consul Catoni to Consul Skene.

M. le Consul,

Alexandrette, le 5 Mai, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de vous remettre ci-inclus un document qui vient de m'être présenté par les principaux négociants d'Alexandrette, et je crois de mon devoir d'y ajouter que tout ce qu'ils exposent est d'une vérité incontestable. Bien que jusqu'à présent il ne s'agisse en effet que de simples appréhensions, néanmoins je ne puis méconnaître le fait qu'elles sont parfaitement fondées.

Aujourd'hui même un malheureux garçon Chrétien, nommé Antona Orfali, à propos d'une rixe d'aucune importance, fut garotté et cruellement maltraité par la police, et avant même d'être jugé fut roué de coups en pleine place publique en dépit de Chrétiens haut placés qui intercédèrent en sa faveur. Cet incident est assez éloquent, surtout par les circonstances actuelles, démontrant clairement l'esprit de rancune que l'autorité entend témoigner envers la population Chrétienne, dont les craintes n'ont fait qu'augmenter en conséquence, et avec raison.

J'ai lieu de croire, M. le Consul, que votre attention est impérieusement appelée à l'examen de l'état critique de cette ville, méritant que des mesures énergiques soient aussitôt prises afin d'obvier aux dangers qui la menacent. Je n'ai pas besoin d'ajouter que toutes les instructions que vous croirez nécessaire de me donner seront promptement et scrupuleusement exécutées.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) A. CATONI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 622.

The Principal Merchants at Alexandrette to Vice-Consul Catoni.

M. le Gérant,

Alexandrette, le 1 Mai, 1877.

LA présence ici de la corvette Anglaise "Torch" a garanti pendant tout l'hiver passé la sûreté du commerce important d'Alexandrette, et nous venons vous prier de vouloir bien transmettre nos remercîments à vos supérieurs pour ce bienfait.

Depuis le départ de cette corvette les dangers menaçants la ville d'Alexandrette de la part des habitants Musulmans des villages environnants sont devenus de plus

en plus accentués, de façon que de graves appréhensions nous dominent, surtout eue considération des complications actuelles. Ces dangers prennent naissance en partie du fanatisme, mais plus spécialement de l'envie du pillage. Ainsi, des blés viennent d'être chargés dans notre port par plusieurs d'entre nous, et des malveillants ont conçu l'idée absurde que ces chargements sont dirigés en Russie. De ceci ressort le dessein qu'ils ont de justifier par un semblant de patriotisme tout acte violent qu'ils commettraient. Aussi, des réunions presque journalières dans la mosquée, et des conciliabules y relatifs, constatent l'existence réelle de pareils projets. Nous savons que le foyer de ces trames dangereusses est à Beylan, chef-lieu de ce district, où déjà les Musulmans ont fait des démonstrations hostiles aux Chrétiens, qui ont motivé la présence du Gouverneur-Général pour apaiser l'excitation des esprits.

Dès lors vous comprendrez, M. le Gérant, que tout ceci n'est guère de nature à nous tranquilliser, soit pour notre propre existence, soit pour les intérêts qui nous sont confiés par le commerce de l'Europe, et surtout de l'Angleterre. C'est pourquoi, sachant la bienveillance du Gouvernement Britannique pour les Chrétiens d'Orient, nous osons implorer la continuation de sa protection par l'envoi d'un autre bâtiment de guerre en station ici. C'est la seule garantie possible qui empêche l'émigration et l'abandon de cette échelle de toute la province d'Alep par sa population Chrétienne.

En vous priant, M. le Gérant, de vouloir bien transmettre la présente pétition à qui de droit, nous avons l'honneur, &c.

(Signed by 12 Merchants.)

No. 623.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 18. Political.)

Trebizond, May 10, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the military movements in this port.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 623.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Layard.

Trebizond, May 10, 1877.

Sir,

AS reported by telegram to your Excellency, Her Majesty's ship "Antelope," with Major-General Kemball on board, arrived here on the morning of the 6th instant, and shortly after nine Ottoman steamers with troops from Constantinople.

The "Antelope" started a few hours after for Constantinople, and the day following Major-General Kemball departed with post-horses for Erzeroom.

The troops landed by the Turkish transports consisted of ten battalions, the whole of which are already *en route* for Erzeroom.

Two of the transports, which had also forty-six cannons, munitions, and two battalions of infantry on board for Batoom, have returned this morning from that port after having landed their cargoes, and are about to steam for Constantinople.

There being no money in the Government chest to pay for the expenses of the troops to Erzeroom, the Pasha raised on the merchants of Trebizond a loan of about 200,000 piastres in Caimés, promising to return it on the expected receipt in the course of the week of 2,000,000 piastres Caimés from Constantinople.

Great difficulty was experienced in procuring the means of transport for the provisions and baggage of the ten battalions.

All the horses available in the neighbourhood not being sufficient, several oxen carts—500 of which had arrived on requisition for the transport of munitions—were employed for the purpose.

I am assured, however, that on their way down the carts had to be taken to pieces and carried on the back of the drivers over several impassable spots. It is hardly presumable, therefore, that they will be able to perform the voyage to Erzeroom with their heavy loads. I have seen the carts, and am under the impression that several of the oxen are in so miserable condition that they will perish on the road.

An attempt is made to forward a few 4-ton cannons to Erzeroom; but if my information on the condition of the road is correct, it is impossible to drag them to their destination at the present moment. As great activity is displayed in repairing the road, the attempt may be successful a few weeks hence, if it be not too late.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 624.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 42. Political.)

Scutari, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch this day addressed by me to Mr. Layard regarding the conduct of the Turkish authorities towards the Mirdite Chiefs, Capitans Marco and Gion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 624.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

IN my despatch to the Earl of Derby No. 39, Political, of the 1st instant, and a copy of which I had the honour to forward to your Excellency in my despatch of the same day, I reported the arrival in Scutari, as a prisoner, of the Mirdite Chief Capitan Marco.

This Chief and his son Capitan Gion have resided for a number of years in Scutari, and have held appointments under the Turkish authorities. When, in the early part of this year, Dervish and Mustafa Pashas determined upon bringing to a head the state of affairs in Mirdicia, Capitan Marco was ordered by them to proceed to Orosci and inform Prenk Bib Doda that he was summoned to Scutari. Dervish Pasha at the same time told Capitan Marco that, if he failed to return with the Mirdite chieftain within a specified term, he would have him and his son Capitan Gion hung.

The result of this threat was that Capitan Marco, having no power to enforce the wishes of the authorities upon the Mirdites, was afraid to return to Scutari, and that his son escaped to the mountains of Sosci.

After some time, however, I was enabled to inform Capitans Marco and Gion that they might come back in safety; but by that time the first had been constituted a prisoner at Orosci, and the latter was afraid to return without his father.

The success of the expedition against Mirdicia left Capitan Marco free, and he immediately repaired to the Turkish head-quarters; but there, too, he was treated as a prisoner, and is now detained as such in Scutari.

Both Capitan Marco and his son, who continues in his mountain refuge, have appealed to me to represent their conduct in its true light to the Governor-General; but, feeling that I should only expose myself to a rebuff from Mustafa Pasha, I have declined to intervene here further on their behalf, and have consented merely to report the matter to your Excellency.

I cannot, however, help repeating the conviction that the Turkish authorities, in maintaining their coercive action against the Mirdites, are acting imprudently, and that their harshness towards men who have been looked upon as their adherents can only help to estrange further from the Imperial Government the Chiefs who are really powerful, and who, by judicious clemency, might be withdrawn from influences which, now more than ever, have not ceased to work for the destruction of the existing state of things in these provinces.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 625.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 33. Political.)

Beyrout, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople respecting the probable return to Syria of the Maronite rebel, Yussef Karam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 625.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that some days ago rumours were spread as to the probable return of the notorious Maronite rebel, Yussef Karam, with a large supply of arms, of which he is said to have a depôt at Corfu.

These rumours created much alarm, especially amongst the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, but the authorities at once took steps to cause his immediate arrest should he attempt to land anywhere in Syria, and these measures have had the effect of somewhat reassuring the public.

The return of Karam, with the effect it would have upon the population of the mountain, would just now have most disastrous results upon the general peace of Syria, as he could not fail to be considered as a Russian emissary sent to create a diversion in Syria, which is probably the case, as I am informed that the rumours of his probable return were first put in circulation by the Russian Consular Agent of Tripoli, who has retired to Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 626.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 34. Political.)

Beyrout, May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to a petition made to the Seraskeriat by the junior officers of the Christian regiment of Dragoons stationed in Mount Lebanon, begging that they may be sent to the seat of war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 626.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that information has reached me to the effect that the junior officers of the Christian regiment of Dragoons, stationed in Mount Lebanon, have addressed or are about to address a petition to the Seraskeriat, begging that the said regiment may be transferred to the seat of war for active service.

The sentiments which prompt these gentlemen to take this step are no doubt laudable and patriotic, yet it would be regrettable if this most useful corps were removed from Syria, where its presence during the last twelve years has been most efficacious in preserving order in the mountain, where the militia or gendarmerie is

composed of native volunteers, who, though perfectly reliable for quelling local disturbances and quarrels, may perhaps not be to be depended on should any serious outbreak take place, such as would be caused by the return of Karam, as to the probability of which rumours are already in circulation.

The militia of the Lebanon at the present time are somewhat and not unnaturally discontented at not having received any pay for some months owing to the non-payment by the Imperial Government of the subsidy accorded in aid of the revenues towards carrying on the administration of the mountain.

I have, therefore, the honour most respectfully to urge your Excellency, should you see fit to do so, to make representations in the proper quarter to prevent the removal of the dragoons, such a measure being in my opinion likely to endanger the peace of the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 627.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 35. Political.)

Beyrout. May 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch and its inclosures, which I addressed on the 11th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the present state of affairs in different parts of Syria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 627.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 11, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Excellency's information, copies of two despatches which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitalé, reporting on the present state of affairs at Lattakia, and I beg to draw your attention to the good conduct of the authorities of that town, which I sincerely hope will meet with the reward it merits at the hands of the Imperial Government. I may add that certain of my colleagues have informed me that the reports they receive from their agents at Lattakia are not quite so favourable as those of Mr. Vitalé, in whose judgment, however, I have every confidence.

I also transmit a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, reporting on the effect produced on the population of Tripoli by the news of the declaration of war.

For your Excellency's further information, I inclose an extract upon a private letter which I have received from Tarsus, giving an account of a disturbance which recently occurred at Mersina.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 627.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 28 *Avril*, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que la nouvelle de la rupture des relations entre la Russie et la Sublime Porte a produit une vive impression sur la population de cette ville en général et une espèce d'excitation parmi la basse classe Musulmane.

Avant hier et hier il y avait des attroupements d'enfants Turcs qui rôdaient nuit et jour en criant des vœux pour le Sultan; quand ils arrivaient aux quartiers habités par les Chrétiens, ils imploraient la colère du ciel contre les infidèles.

L'on m'a assuré qu'ils ont jeté des pierres à la porte d'une petite école des Missionnaires Américains contigue à l'établissement de la Mission et de la maison du Vice-Consul des Etats-Unis.

Tout cela a fait peur aux Chrétiens mais il faut rendre justice à l'autorité locale en vous informant en même temps, M. le Consul-Général, que Mahmoud Aga Haznadar, qui était chargé de la gestion du Caïmacamlik pendant l'absence du titulaire Ahmad Effendi Cheukri, qui est rentré en ville hier soir, ont tous les deux très-bien agi et réussi à mettre fin à ces attroupements d'enfants Musulmans dans les rues; ils accompagnent la patrouille pendant la nuit et je sais qu'ils ont fait quelques arrestations de gamins Turcs mal élevés qui se sont trouvés la nuit dans le quartier Chrétien et qu'ils ont engagé les notables Musulmans de la ville de veiller avec eux sur la tranquillité et le maintien du bon ordre.

L'Agent Consulaire de Russie a quitté brusquement la ville; il est parti avant hier par le bateau des Messageries Maritimes laissant à l'autorité locale une lettre par laquelle il fait part de la rupture des relations entre les deux Puissances et qu'il remet l'archive de l'agence au Vice-Consulat d'Allemagne en la chargent de la protection des protégés Russes.

Le Caïmacam, que j'ai vu aujourd'hui, m'a dit qu'il venait de recevoir la nouvelle de la rupture officiellement de Tripoli et que par la même dépêche on lui faisait une forte recommandation en faveur des protégés Russes, y compris les drogmans et les Cawass de l'Agence Consulaire.

Les troupes qui se trouvent à la montagne des Ansaryéhs ont reçu l'ordre de descendre et camper près de Gébelé; et le Caïmacam de rester dans son poste à Lattaquié.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALÉ.

Inclosure 3 in No. 627.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 8 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que l'excitation dont vous informait mon rapport du 28 Avril dernier a complètement disparu et que depuis lors il n'y a rien ou qui puisse faire présumer que la tranquillité soit troublée en cette ville, ce qui est dû à la vigilence du Caïmacam Ahmad Cheukri Effendi, qui ne cesse de surveiller avec beaucoup d'attention au maintien du bon ordre.

Sécondé dans sa tâche du maintien du bon ordre et de la tranquillité en cette ville par Mahmoud Aga Haznadar, membre du Méjliss-Idarat et chef d'une respectable famille Musulmane, qui de tous les temps a rendu des services au Gouvernement Ottoman, ainsi que par Elias Effendi (Mal-Mudiri) et Ibrahim Effendi (Cahrirat-Katibi) Secrétaires de l'autorité locale, le dit Caïmacam y réussi admirablement bien et fait régner une espèce d'entente sous ce rapport parmi les Musulmans et les Chrétiens en cette ville.

Vous n'ignorez certes pas, M. le Consul-Général, qu'Ahmad Cheukri a été envoyé ici en Avril 1876 par son Excellence Hamdi Pacha, alors Gouverneur-Général de la Syrie, en qualité de commissaire chargé du rétablissement de l'ordre ébranlé à l'occasion de l'incident du caissier de la douane et que depuis il a été nommé Caïmacam en récompense de ses services en cette affaire. Vous n'ignorez pas non plus, M. le Consul-Général, que depuis lors et malgré tous les événements qui ont eu lieu et qui étaient capables de réveiller l'esprit fanatique des Musulmans en cette ville, une parfaite tranquillité y a régné.

Pensant donc qu'une telle conduite mérite d'être récompensée et que la récompense de la part de la Sublime Porte de pareils serviteurs fidèles ne peut qu'encourager bien d'autres à suivre la même ligne de conduite, je prends la liberté de vous soumettre ce qui précède espérant que vous voudrez bien le signaler par la voie que vous jugerez la plus convenable aux autorités supérieures Ottomanes dans le but de les animer à récompenser le dit Caïmacam Ahmad Cheukri Effendi, ainsi que Mahmoud Aga Haznadar, Elias Effendi, et Ibrahim Effendi, sans pourtant que cette récompense soit une promotion causant à la ville de Lattakié la perte de leurs précieux services.

Espérant aussi que vous voudrez prendre en considération ce que j'ai l'honneur de vous exposer, je vous prie, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALÉ.

Inclosure 4 in No. 627.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Tripoli, le 8 Mai*, 1877.

DEPUIS une quinzaine de jours que la guerre est déclarée, l'état de notre ville est resté satisfaisant. Pendant les premiers jours, et avant qu'aucune opération de guerre ait eu le temps encore de se produire, des bruits extravagants furent répandus sur de prétendus succès de l'armée Ottomane. Il en résulta une grande exultation dans le people Musulman, et pendant quelques jours, les insultes aux Chrétiens furent fréquentes. L'autorité se montra vigilante dans la répression; puis, les voies nouvelles commençant à se faire jour, toute cette effervescence tomba, et voici sept ou huit jours que le calme est à peu près complet.

Les cas d'insultes sont encore assez nombreux; il se passe peu de jours qu'il n'en arrive un ou deux à ma connaissance; mais ils sont devenus beaucoup plus anodins qu'auparavant, et, d'ailleur, l'autorité fait son devoir.

Malgré l'incontestable amélioration qui s'est produite, les Chrétiens Grecs Orthodoxes n'en restent pas moins très effrayés de l'avenir, et ils émigrent en masse dans le Koura. M. Alex. Catzeflis, Vice-Consul de Russie, est parti le premier, et s'est installé au village d'Amioun; et depuis les départs n'ont pas cessé.

Les Maronites n'ont pas encore bougé.

Il est arrivé dernièrement 300 Rédifs de Djebié. On va compléter le bataillon avec les appelés de notre province. La levée paraît être assez laborieuse dans les districts d'Akkar et de Daunié; et il y a apparence que le troisième contingent sera très inférieur aux précédents.

Je suis, &c.
(Signé) BLANCHE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 627.

Mr. Anketil to Consul-General Eldridge.

(Extract.) *Tarsus, May 5*, 1877.

ANOTHER disturbance has occurred at Mersina which might have led to serious consequences. It appears that, on the 29th ultimo, when the declaration of war was announced, a mob of Mohammedans, estimated at about 200 and 300, went to the Kaïmakam to demand that the Russian Vice-Consular flag-staff should be immediately removed. The Kaïmakam arranged with the Vice-Consular representative that at sunset some boatmen should be employed to remove the staff, and with this assurance the mob was apparently satisfied, but as soon as they left the Kaïmakam's presence they rushed in a body to the spot, cut down the flag-staff and broke it into pieces, which they carried to the Government konak, where they threw them down with every kind of obscene insult and imprecations against the infidels. The Kaïmakam, who heard the mob had gone to the flag-staff and had followed them with the few zapties, five or six only at his disposal, in the hope of preventing trouble, very narrowly escaped personal violence and had to take shelter in the house of a Christian. After depositing the remains of the flag-staff as above said, the mob walked the streets with Turkish flags calling for volunteers for the army to destroy the infidels, and several proceeded to the Greek cemetery, where they broke some of the marble tombs and crosses to pieces, upon which they threw filth, with insulting and obscene expressions.

It appears that subsequently a number of these excited men collected in the house of one of the ringleaders to concert further schemes of violence, and the alarm became general amongst the Christians who shut themselves in their houses and remained there in a state of terror until the following morning, when the Wali of the province arrived from Adana with police to quell the commotion. Although the ringleaders are known, only one of them has been arrested hitherto, and it is said the Wali is waiting instructions from the Porte before taking energetic measures or making examples, and in this matter he appears to be pursuing the same course he took about the Muffetish in Adana, who, in the execution of a Government order, beat an Armenian blacksmith so unmercifully that he died from the effects.

Volunteering is on the increase in this province very much to the credit of the people when a struggle for national existence is in question, but unless conducted under Government control and under the eye of a capable Governor-General is

dangerous, especially where so many of the population are Greeks, the lower orders of Mohammedans not making a very wide distinction between Greek and Russian.

No. 628.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 14. Political.)

Adrianople, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert relative to military preparations in the Sandjak of Philippopolis.

I also inclose a translated extract from the "Maritch," a Turkish newspaper published here, containing information relative to the fortification of the Balkan passes within this vilayet, an undertaking which has just been commenced.

As regards the enrolment of Circassians, very few of that people have as yet volunteered for service on the Danube. I am informed by persons who are on terms of intimacy with the leading Circassians in these parts that, whilst feeling themselves able to cope with any enemy in irregular, and especially mountain, warfare, they consider that they would have no chance against a disciplined force like that of the Russians fighting in the open field. It is obvious that that objection could be met by reserving the services of the Circassians for the defence, should there be need, of the Balkans. But it is suspected that their lukewarmness is in part to be accounted for by the small opportunity which the present juncture would afford them, as compared with the late war in Servia, of acquiring their favourite booty—cattle. This conjecture is supported by the following facts:—The adult male population of Mandra, a Circassian village of 400 houses in this neighbourhood, volunteered *en masse* to fight against the Principality. They now stipulate as the price of their services against Russia that the pasture lands of three mixed Turkish and Christian villages (Babaeski, Nadioli, and Tchifili) shall be made over to them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 628.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopolis, May 9, 1877.

Sir,

A TELEGRAPHIC order was yesterday received here for all the mounted police of the sandjak, numbering 300 men, to be got ready to join the Turkish forces on the Danube. The police and military force at the disposal of the local authorities will thus be reduced to 500 "piadehs," or foot police; about 580 regular cavalry, belonging to the 1st and 2nd regiments of the 1st Army Corps, and stationed at Philippopolis and Eski-Zaghra; and 3,600 men of the territorial army, or "mustahfiz," who have lately been called under arms. Of the latter, 1,600 are stationed at Philippopolis, and 2,000 at Kyzanlik.

The duties of the mounted police are to be performed during their absence by an equal number of men selected from among the "mustahfiz."

The regular forces remaining in the sandjak would be amply sufficient to quell any rising of the Bulgarians, of which, however, there is for the present not the slightest probability. Being nearly all natives of the sandjak, it is doubtful how far they could be depended upon to repress an outbreak of the Mussulmans. Happily, of this latter eventuality, there is now as little likelihood as there is of a Bulgarian revolutionary movement.

It was announced yesterday, at a meeting of the heads of the different communities convoked by the Governor, that a further war contribution was required by the Sultan, the proportion of which leviable on the district of Philippopolis would be 13,000,000 piastres. A Commission was accordingly appointed by the meeting to superintend the collection of the contribution. The meeting was further informed by the Governor that the Porte would accept the services of any persons, of whatsoever faith, who would volunteer to fight for their country—not, however, as Bashi-Bazouks

(a class of combatants whom the Sultan was determined not to employ), but as regular soldiers, who would be subjected to a course of military discipline and drill before being allowed to peform active service.

It is improbable that any considerable number of men will volunteer under these conditions, the main object of Turkish volunteers in time of war being, as is well known, plunder, not fighting.

The Commission mentioned above will, I understand, propose to the Government that the war contribution, when realized, should not be sent to the Treasury, but kept in hand here for the purchase of any supplies (of which there is a sufficient abundance in the district) that may be needed for the army, and in measure as they are called for.

Besides the war contribution of 13,000,000 piastres (the second that has been demanded since last summer), the villages of the district are about to be called upon to furnish 200,000 piastres, which, together with 60,000 piastres already collected in Philippopolis, will be applied to furnishing the "mustahfiz" with uniforms. Mussulman and Christian villages are to contribute alike to both the above funds; the only exception to be made being, presumably, in favour of the villages destroyed in the late troubles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 628.

Extract from the Turkish Newspaper "Maritch" of May 13, 1877.

(Translation.)

JEUDI passé est arrivé dans notre ville Halet Pacha chargé de surveiller les travaux de défense à construire dans les passages de la chaîne des Balkans et de prendre les dispositions nécessaires, quant aux ouvriers et outils nécessaires pour cette tâche.

Le Gouvernement a donné l'ordre de commencer dans notre vilayet la fortification des passages vers la Mer Noire, c'est-à-dire de Derviche-Yovan, Nadir-Derbendi, Cazan, Demir-Capou, Chipka, et Orhanié, en donnant attention surtout à ceux de Cazan et de Chipka, vu leur plus grande importance.

D'après nos renseignements la division de l'armée de Sophia travaille aux fortifications du passage Orhanié et les troupes sous le commandement du Férik Néjib Pacha de ceux de Derviche-Yovan et de Nadir-Derbendi. Quant aux travaux de Chipka et de Cazan, les Vilayets d'Andrinople et de Touna, y prendront part aussi par prestation. Des mesures ont été prises à cet effet.

Halet Pacha est accompagné de Houdoussi Bey et de Rifat Bey, officiers de l'Etat-Major, ainsi que des Capitaines Fuad Effendi et Mehmet Ali Effendi, chargés de faire le tracé des dites fortifications et de diriger les travaux de la construction. Fuad Bey et Mehmet Ali Effendi partent demain pour Slimné d'où il se rendront à Chipka.

No. 629.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 85.)

Athens, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose an article from the last number of the "Messager d'Athènes," describing, with perhaps some degree of exaggeration, the means of offence against Turkey which Greece has at her disposal, in order to show that it would be well worth the while of the former Power to secure the benevolent neutrality of Hellenism by engaging to grant the same concessions to the Hellenic populations as those which may be granted to their Slavonic neighbours at the end of the present war.

This article makes special mention of one concession which it would certainly be of the most vital importance for the Hellenic populations to obtain, viz., that the Mussulmans who may, whether from necessity or from choice, withdraw from the Slavonic provinces, should not be permitted to settle in the Hellenic provinces. Such

an addition to the Mussulman element in the latter provinces would, perhaps, be a death-blow to the interests and aspirations of the Hellenic race for many generations to come; and it is a danger to which it may not be premature for me to call your Lordship's serious attention at once, from a Christian as well as from an Hellenic point of view.

Besides the above article, the extract from the "Messager" which I inclose contains a summary of recent articles from various other journals, which may be of interest as showing the general tone of the Greek press under present circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 630.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 37. Political.)
My Lord, *Salonica, May 16, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a despatch which I addressed on the 12th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte referring to the orders received by the Vali here to send all the mounted zaptiehs to the Commander-in-chief at Rustchuk; the surrender of a noted brigand chief; and that the prohibition to export grain to Europe has been deferred for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 630.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, May 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Governor-General of this vilayet, Dervish Pasha, has received orders from the Porte to send all the "Souvaree" zaptiehs on horseback, which are to be found in the Sandjaks of Serres, Drama, Monastir, and Salonica, to the Serdar Ekrem Abdil-Kerim Pasha, at Roustchuk, but he has decided to send only 65 out of every 100 men. These amount to 400 men altogether.

But 260 zaptiehs on horseback will be a very small force for the transaction of the Government business in the villages.

To protect this city there are 450 National Guard who have arms of their own; a corps which has been called into existence since the late murders of the Consuls a year ago.

The brigand Youmez Ghegha (mentioned in a previous report) has given himself up with twelve of his followers, and has declared he will be instrumental in capturing other gangs of brigands.

His Excellency Dervish Pasha has promised him full pardon, and a decoration from the Porte if he be as good as his word.

The prohibition to export grain has been countermanded for the present here; but I hear from Mr. Vice-Consul Suter that at Volo it has been enforced on the 9th instant; but it will not effect contracts entered into prior to the date of proclamation of the recent order. Volo is in a different position to Salonica; there grain is scarce.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. B. B. BARKER.

No. 631.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 38. Political.)
My Lord, *Salonica, May 17, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that his Excellency our Governor-General, Dervish Pasha, has notified to the heads of the Jewish and Christian communities that he insists on the arrears of the sum of 350,000 piastres, which was demanded from the inhabitants of this city some months ago as "assistance money" to the Government (about a fifth of which is still due by them), shall be paid in three days. The Mussulmans have nearly paid all their quota of this sum, which was as follows:—

	Piastres.
From the Jews	160,000
From the Turks	140,000
From the Christians	50,000
Total	350,000

His Excellency insists also that all other arrears of taxes, &c., shall be paid up immediately. He has received orders from the Porte to send all the "Mustafiz" (Reserve Militia) from the several districts under his authority and jurisdiction to Nish, where they will be provided with clothes and arms. At present they form a ragged rabble in appearance, and nothing more. Some time will necessarily elapse before these men can be collected together here from the villages, and sent on by rail. Their number is supposed to be 24,000; but as hundreds desert from time to time, it is impossible to ascertain what their actual number may be until they arrive at Nish.

Her Majesty's ship "Pallas" came into port yesterday from Smyrna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

P.S.—A copy of this despatch will be sent by the first post to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

E. B. B. B.

No. 632.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Corfu, May 22, 1877.*

I DO myself the honour to transmit copy of the following telegram, received last night from St. Maura, relative to the whereabouts of the brigands whose escape from Turkish surveillance at Janina was reported in my despatch No. 5, Political, of the 15th instant:—

"Eighteen brigands actually in district of Carvassera. Troops from Missolongi and other stations sent through Zaverda to chase them. No mischief by brigands reported.

(Signed) "ONORIO."

At Carvassera, close upon the Turkish frontier, the brigands are completely masters of the position. An hour's march would bring them to the forest of Radovizzi, twenty square miles in extent at the most moderate computation, and whence all the Greek army would not suffice to dislodge them.

As the Greek Government are empowered by a formal Convention to send an armed force into Ottoman territory in pursuit of brigands, there is some danger, in the event of their doing so on the present occasion, of a collision between them and the Turkish police.

It must be allowed, however, that in such cases of the kind as have have occurred

hitherto, the Greek soldiery have uniformly behaved with the greatest circumspection and forbearance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 633.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 206. Confidential.)

Rome, May 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatches No. 169, Confidential, of the 30th ultimo, and No. 187, Confidential, of the 11th instant, the second inclosing a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, recording the apprehensions entertained by the Duc Decazes lest the Italian Government, taking advantage of any fortunate conjuncture of circumstances, should attempt to seize upon Tunis; the first inclosing a copy of a despatch addressed by General Conolly to Lord Lyons, reporting the impression very generally entertained in the French army of the southern and south-eastern districts that Italy is bound by an alliance with Germany, who is to employ her either as an instrument against Austria, or, "with the bait of regaining Nice, in giving trouble to France."

It is always extremely difficult to prove a negative, and in political matters it had better not be attempted. I shall therefore confine myself to a simple statement of the reasons why I do not think the conjectures of either the Duc Decazes or of the officers of the French army are correct.

I should observe, in the first place, that the suspicion of an intention on the part of Italy to seize Tunis has been one which has never ceased troubling the French mind, at all events as long as I have been in Italy. In 1870 or 1871 there were some very serious differences between Baron Pinna, the Italian Consul-General, and the Bey's Government, and I had a great many communications on the subject with the then French Minister in Florence, M. Rothan, and with the Marquis (then Chevalier) Visconti Venosta. Nothing would persuade M. Rothan that the whole quarrel was not got up simply in order to give the Italian Government an opportunity of seizing Tunis at a time when France was occupied with other matters. He wrote it to his Government, and I believe his Government shared his conviction.

Since then various other disputes have arisen between M. Pinna (who seems to be a meddlesome, fussy, overbearing, intriguing, quarrelsome man, and whom M. Visconti Venosta once promised me to remove to another sphere of action) and the Bey's Ministers; and on each of these occasions I am bound to say I have heard the same suspicions repeated by my French colleagues; but whenever I have spoken to the Italian Minister on the subject I have always received the most categorical denial that there was any such wish or intention as the conquest of Tunis on the part of the Italian Government. M. Visconti Venosta's favourite expression used to be, and it will be found recorded more than once in my despatches, "Quand même l'on m'offrirait la Tunisie sur un plateau demain, je ne l'accepterais pas;" and events have so far certainly justified the disclaimer of the Italian Minister.

With M. Melegari I have never, as far as I recollect, had any conversation on the subject of Tunis, but I am not aware of any reason which authorizes the supposition that he is more aggressively or ambitiously inclined than his predecessor.

I know, of course, that it is wise to accept the declarations of Foreign Ministers on such subjects as these with a certain amount of caution, but I think that, in forming an opinion upon the ambitious designs attributed to a country, it is essential, in order to arrive at a correct judgment, to take into consideration the advantages or disadvantages which would be likely to follow the carrying into execution of the designs in question.

Now, my own idea, with all deference to higher authority, of course, is, that the acquisition of Tunis would be of no sort of benefit to Italy, and that the perils and risks she would incur in her endeavours to seize it would be very great.

Italy has already a more extensive sea-board than she is capable, unassisted, of protecting from the attack of any great maritime Power. Why, therefore, should she wish to increase her difficulties in this respect by the adjunction of another naval station on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean?

The example of Algeria in the hands of the French has not been of so engaging a character as to be likely to tempt the Italians to try their hands at a similar experiment at colonisation. Nor is it presumable that in the interest of the maintenance of good relations with France, they can desire to have another point of contact with the territory of that country, on the coast of Africa. They must be perfectly well aware, too, that any attempt on their part to take possession of Tunis would be likely to encounter the opposition, not only of France, but of another maritime Power, for whom perhaps they have more respect, and whose hostility, I really cannot bring myself to believe, they would willingly provoke. Is it, therefore, probable that any Italian Government can be so crazed as seriously to entertain a project which, even if they should be able to carry it through, would be of no advantage, but only a source of danger to Italy, and the attempt to execute which they must know beforehand would imperil the very existence of the Italian Government itself? I cannot think so, and I, therefore, do not share the apprehensions of the Duc Decazes.

Italy must, of course, always feel a great interest in the condition and fate of Tunis on account of the numerous Italian commercial community established there, but my opinion of the policy of the Italian Government, as regards the Regency, is that they wish, under present circumstances, for the maintenance of the existing state of things. Of course, if there was to be a general break-up of the Turkish Empire, and a redistribution of the territorial arrangements of the different Powers of Europe, the case might assume a different aspect. When the geographical position of Tunis towards Italy is considered, it will be easily understood that she might very well object to a territory, so menacing to her coasts and to some of her principal harbours, falling into the hands of another strong maritime Power, and might, therefore, and probably would, raise pretensions to it herself.

What I have said above, therefore, must only be taken as referring to the circumstances of the present day, and looking at things as they are now, I am obliged to record my belief that no additional complications need be apprehended on account of the ambitious designs of Italy upon Tunis.

I am equally sceptical about the existence of an alliance between Germany and Italy, "which enables the former to rely upon the co-operation of the latter in any warlike measures." A report to this effect, which had appeared in one of the clerical papers of Lyons, was referred to by M. Melegari in his speech in the Chamber of Deputies on the 23rd ultimo, as an instance of the absurd rumours which were continually being spread as to the policy of the Italian Government.

But since M. Melegari spoke in the Chambers the story has been very much improved upon by the clerical papers, and I myself am brought before the public as the hero in a most sensational and dramatical conversation with the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the full details of which are given by the devout and veracious correspondent.

I am described as having gone to M. Melegari by your Lordship's orders to ask his Excellency a categorical statement as to the policy which Italy intended to pursue during the Russo-Turkish war and in the complications which might be expected to be the result of it. M. Melegari, seeing the scope of my inquiry, in the first place tries to evade an answer, but being pressed replies that Italy, desirous and having need of peace, intends to preserve a strict neutrality. Upon this I am reported to have replied, "Of course I believe you, M. le Ministre, but I happen to have in my pocket a document which proves precisely the contrary," and upon this I produce a copy of a secret Treaty concluded between Germany and Italy, and bearing Signor Melegari's signature, by which Italy binds herself to join her arms to those of Germany, and is to receive as her recompense Nice and Savoy, the Trentino and Trieste. M. Melegari, needless to say, is completely dumbfounded, and can only mumble a few phrases about the document in my possession being only a *project* and not a *pièce* actually signed.

When, however, such fables as this are seriously propagated by the press, and not only in the clerical press but the account I have quoted has appeared in an Italian newspaper, the "Gazzetta d'Italia," a good deal read in this country, is it surprising that an impression such as that described by General Conolly, should exist in the minds of the officers of the French army? I am enabled to state that the story above related has found a certain amount of credence amongst persons of a far less excitable temperament than French officers, for it is not many days since that I was asked by a correspondent of one of the English newspapers here whether there was any truth in the report, and I believe he had the intention of telegraphing home to contradict it.

I do not know what the extraordinary movements in the north of Italy were which some time ago aroused the suspicions of the French military authorities, and, as

no precise moment is specified, I do not know how to find out. But I have told Her Majesty's Consul at Florence, who is just gone to North Italy, to be attentive, and to report upon anything unusual which he may either see or hear. I sometimes feel a regret that we have not an occasional visit from a military as well as a naval attaché to Italy. I believe that the progress of the Italian army is worth study and consideration.

But, to return to the subject under discussion. While I cannot, of course, undertake to make any positive assertion on such a matter, yet, called upon to express an opinion, I can have no hesitation in declaring that I no more believe in the existence at the present time of an Italo-Germanic alliance for the objects in question than I do in the existence of the copy of the Treaty which I am said to have brought out of my pocket in the interview, above described, with M. Melegari.

The Italians no doubt felt very keenly the loss of Nice and Savoy when they were taken from them, particularly as they had been told that France, in the exuberance of her generosity, unparalleled in any other country, made war for an "idea;" but I do not think there is any hankering now in Italy to regain those provinces. I think, on the contrary, that all the sensible and reasonable portion of the community—and it is only fair to credit the Italian Ministers with being men of sense and reason,—are perfectly satisfied to have the Alps as a frontier and barrier between France and Italy.

If more reliance is placed now in Italy upon the friendship of Germany than of France, the cause is to be found in the known sentiments of the clerical, reactionary, and military party in France. In my despatch No. 207, Most Confidential, of 7th June, 1873, to Lord Granville, I endeavoured to explain the causes of the great change which had come over the public feeling in Italy since my residence in this country.

But, notwithstanding this, nothing, I must own, would surprise me more than to learn that Italy had entered into any engagements with Germany to the prejudice of either France or Austria.

My strong impression is that Italy is at the present moment, as announced by her Ministers in Parliament, unfettered by any engagements with foreign Powers, and that her great object and desire will be to observe strictly the neutrality she has proclaimed, to remain at peace with all the world, and to contribute, as far as she may be able, towards localizing the present war, and bringing it to a speedy end.

This impression is derived not only from my conversations with the Italian Ministers but from what I observe in the tone of the language of the press and of independent individuals with whom I speak. I hear but one sentiment, viz., that Italy has absolutely need of peace, and must do everything to avoid being mixed up in complications.

What may be the policy of Italy if a general war should break out is a different question, which it seems to me it will be time enough to discuss when so dreadful a calamity is really imminent.

The difficult moment for Italy, should it ever arrive, will no doubt be when Austria occupies Bosnia and Herzegovina; but M. Melegari has repeatedly assured me that the Government is master of the situation, and that the event to which I allude would not give rise to any military action on the part of the Italian Government.

I must apologise to your Lordship for the length of this despatch, but I have thought it right to give my reasons for not sharing the ideas or the impressions of the Duc Decazes and the officers of the French army in regard to the intentions or engagements of the Italian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 634.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 210.) *Rome, May 22, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN an interview I had with M. Melegari this morning, I asked his Excellency if he had any intelligence which enabled him to form an opinion as to the probability or otherwise of Servia taking part in the war. His Excellency told me that he had no news whatever from Belgrade.

M. Melegari informed me, however, that he heard from St. Petersburgh that the Emperor, accompanied by the Grand Dukes and Prince Gortchakow, was to arrive at the Russian head-quarters on the 2nd of June, and the impression which this news made upon him was, that probably some great military event was expected about that time, and that the presence of Prince Gortchakow with the Emperor was an indication that if Russia gained a victory, immediate proposals for peace would be made.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 635.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 215. Confidential.) *Rome, May 22, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to a part of my despatch No. 206 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith an extract of a letter which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul for North Italy and East Tuscany, stating that there do not appear to be any signs of military movements in the North of Italy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 635.

Consul Colnaghi to Sir A. Paget.

Hotel Brün, Bologna, May 21, 1877.

(Extract.)

I HAVE just arrived at this place. I duly received your note of the 15th. I have not noticed in North Italy any outward signs of military movements, and I am assured that at the Arsenal at Turin at the present time no special preparations are being made.

I will endeavour to find out something further here. Up to the present time all the information I have obtained has been negative. There is no appearance of any activity on the North-Italian lines that I have traversed.

In last night's "Pungolo" it was announced that Generals Longo, Brignone, and Bruzzo, were on a tour of inspection of the Alpine fortifications, more particularly of the works in progress on the Col di Lenda. It was added that this inspection had no connection with the present complications.

I heard it mentioned at Milan that there had been some rumours of an eventual concentration of troops on the Asiatic (Adriatic ?) Coast, in order to enable the Italians to occupy Albania (?) should it be necessary for the Austrians to enter Bosnia. I will write to Ancona to inquire.

No. 636.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 26.*)

(No. 471.) *Vienna, May 23, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 907 of the 30th December of last year, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a further letter, which I have received from Mr. James Long, reporting the nature of the assistance which he has afforded to the sufferers from the late disturbances in Bulgaria, irrespective of their nationality or creed, and stating the number of villages in which he has rebuilt ruined houses and established schools.

Mr. Long's report is accompanied by letters from the local authorities in the Caza of Bazardjik to the Governor of Adrianople, and from Ali Pasha to the Grand Vizier, acknowledging his services to the distressed populations of that district.

Your Lordship will probably concur in the opinion that the principles which have guided Mr. Long in the application of the means placed at his disposal appear to merit the consideration and adoption of all persons who take an active interest in the

population of European Turkey, and are desirous of promoting peace and goodwill among the different races and religious communities of which it is composed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 636.

Mr. Long to Sir A. Buchanan.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AI déjà eu l'honneur il y a quelque temps de vous développer longuement le caractère et la marche de mes travaux en Bulgarie. Depuis lors, j'ai poursuivi mon œuvre avec la plus grande vigueur, sans m'arrêter ni être impressioné par les obstacles et les buissons du terrain que je rencontrai à chaque pas, soit de la part des autorités Turques, soit de la part des populations que j'avais à secourir.

Mais avant d'entrer dans le détail de toutes les menées et intrigues qu'on a essayé de susciter pour dénaturer le but de mes efforts, je me permettrai de vous en exposer sommairement le résultat.

Secondé par un personnel actif et dévoué, fort de la conscience de mon devoir, ayant eu extrêmement soin de ne pas me préoccuper des visées des uns et des ambitions des autres, je suis heureusement parvenu aujourd'hui à abriter plusieurs milliers d'individus qui logeaient auparavant dans des trous qu'ils s'étaient faits sous terre faute d'habitations à les vêtir, les couvrir, et enfin je suis occupé en ce moment à leur procurer des semailles pour qu'ils puissent cultiver leurs terrains, et ne pas mourir de faim.

Conformément à mon programme de répartition de secours, je n'ai tenu compte dans mes opérations d'aucune considération de race ni de culte. J'ai traité les Musulmans, comme j'ai fait pour les Bulgares et les Israélites, comme j'aurais fait pour n'importe quelle nationalité qui se trouverait dans le même état de misère et d'infortune.

En poursuivant mon œuvre, je n'ai pu m'empêcher de remarquer que la source vraie et unique des souffrances des populations de ce vaste Empire Ottoman est plutôt morale que matérielle; le sol éminemment fertile, le climat tempéré, la multiplicité des rivières et des forêts, et une foule d'autres ressources très favorables au développement du commerce et de l'agriculture, feraient de ces contrées un véritable Eden, si on parvenait à répandre quelques lumières dans les esprits, à polir les intelligences et à les faire participer par des progrès successifs et sérieux, à la vie de nos populations Européennes. Voilà pourquoi une des principales choses que je me suis empressé d'exécuter, ce fut la création des écoles, ainsi dans les vingt-six villages où j'ai travaillé dans la Caza de Bazardjik, j'ai fait construire dans chacun une école où des instituteurs envoyés sur ma demande par l'Archimandrite de cette ville enseignent les premiers éléments à des milliers d'enfants qui vivaient jusqu'à ce jour dans l'ignorance et l'oisiveté.

Mais, Excellence, pour arriver à ce résultat j'ai dû me heurter contre les susceptibilités aussi futiles que mesquines, et cela de la part des personnages soi-disant les plus éclairés, défier des intrigues, des méchancetés, et surmonter des obstacles que je n'aurais jamais pu prévoir avant d'arriver dans le pays. Les plus grandes difficultés qui ont failli à plusieurs reprises entraver mon action, ce fut la défiance plus ou moins dissimulée, et une espèce de contradiction latente de la part des autorités Turques, qui, au début paraissaient assez bien disposées. Cela s'explique par leur prétention de vouloir dire plus tard qu'elles ont tout réparé et tout remis à elles seules, et sans le secours de personne. Ce qui m'a beaucoup étonné, c'est le veto qu'elles m'ont opposé après que j'ai reconstruit un village Turc, à ce que je continuasse à en restaurer d'autres. Elles ont accepté des vêtements et des semences que je leur ai donnés en quantités considérables pour les populations Musulmanes. Elles seraient disposées à accepter de l'argent si je leur en donnais, ce qui n'est pas dans mes habitudes de faire, mais elles se sont artificieusement opposées à ce que je rebatisse les maisons des Musulmans. Quant aux Bulgares eux il fallait les convaincre que je n'était pas venu pour les faire changer la religion de leurs ancêtres, et surtous, les désabuser de l'idée qu'ils s'étaient faite de ma mission; ils croyaient que j'étais venu les défendre à tort et à raison dans leurs moindres intérêts auprès des Turcs, et à leur faire donner toujours raison.

Cette idée, ou, plutôt cette illusion de leur part, s'explique aussi par les promesses des prétendants à la philanthropie qui parcourent ce pays, des journalistes ambulants,

et par la conduite des personnes qui étaient réellement chargées de distribuer des secours, et qui ont perverti le but auquel étaient destinés les fonds qu'on leur avait confiés. La plupart en a cherché, en effet, un moyen et une occasion de pousser les villageois, aussi naïfs que malheureux, à la réforme, et à inculquer dans leurs pauvres cervelles, des idées de prosélytisme, soit de religion soit de politique; et pour mieux atteindre leur but, ces messieurs se sont servi de toutes les cordes et tous les arcs. Ils n'ont pas même hésité de confondre leurs œuvres avec la mienne dans l'esprit des populations, ce que je me suis à chaque moment donné à repousser et de défier. De là une cabale contre moi, et, je suis désolé de le dire, de la part de mes propres compatriotes, que je suis continuellement forcé de déjouer et de combattre.

Je suis heureux cependant de pouvoir à la fin informer votre Excellence que, par la persévérance et la stricte adhésion à mon programme de secourir l'humanité souffrante, sans tenir compte de nationalité ni de politique ni de religion, et à ma dévise (*res non verba*), je suis arrivé à surmonter toutes difficultés et à gagner la confiance de toutes les diverses races et cultes qui composent la population de la Turquie d'Europe. En constatation de ce fait j'ai l'honneur de soumettre à l'appréciation de votre Excellence les lettres ci-jointes des autorités Turques dans le Vilayet d'Andrinople, et je veux ajouter en même temps un aperçu de résultats.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) JAMES LONG.

Inclosure 2 in No. 636.

Statistique des Constructions faites dans vingt Villages ruinés par l'Insurrection dans le Caza de Bazardjik.

4,769 personnes composant à peu près—
600 familles sont maintenant confortablement casées dans des maisons meilleures que paysan Bulgare n'a jamais habitées.
Une addition.—Ces constructions comprennent—
22 Ecoles, fonctionnant déjà, et fréquentées par plusieurs milliers d'enfants.

Aperçu des journées d'ouvriers, des journées d'arabas et des matériaux divers employés pour les constructions.

18,282 journées de main-d'œuvre.
17,367 „ de charpentiers.
7,900 „ d'arabas de différentes espèces de voitures.
80,884 planches.
10,643 poutres.
1,890 kantars de chaux (environ 5,000 kilogs.)
509 barils de pointes.
5,737 arabas de pierres pour les fondations et pour les constructions de cheminées.
46 caisses de verres à vitres.
108 rouleaux de poutres goudronnées.
118,000 tuiles pour les couvertures des maisons d'écoles.
85,000 briques.
1,000 tuyaux en poterie.
1,553,720 points et clous de différentes espèces.

Inclosure 3 in No. 636.

Statistique de la Répartition des Secours faite par M. James Long dans trente-deux Villages victimes de l'Insurrection dans le Caza de Bazardjik.

Répartition des Vêtements.

Nombre de ballots reçus, 79.

Contenu de ces Ballots.

2,819 couvertures en laine.
1,086 paires de bas en laine.
108 rouleaux d'étoffe.
4,061 objets d'habillement.
739 rouleaux de flanelle et divers.

Nombre de familles secourues jusqu'au 20 Avril:—

2,569 familles. Chaque famille composée de 4 à 5 personnes.

Répartition des Semences.

6,997 sacs de maïs.
3,548 sacs de vesces.
1,872 sacs d'orge.
2,031 sacs de haricots.

Contenu de chaque sac : 2½ hectolitres.

Nombre de familles secourues avec des semences :—

9,367 familles.

Inclosure 4 in No. 636.

Ali Pasha to the Grand Vizier.

Andrinople, le 23 Avril, 1877.

Altesse,

M. JAMES LONG, qui a été depuis six mois en Bulgarie, dans le but louable de porter secours aux populations qui ont souffert pendant les derniers événements, vient me visiter aujourd'hui à Andrinople et m'a annoncé son départ provisoire pour l'Angleterre.

Ainsi que votre Altesse va le comprendre par les rapports des autorités de Bazardjik, M. Long a accompli sa délicate et difficile tâche en Bulgarie d'une manière irréprochable.

Il a restauré plusieurs villages, parmi lesquels j'ai vu moi-même ceux de Schi-Cuchli, Palanka, et Yeni-Keui.

Il a distribué aussi une quantité très-considérable de semences et d'habillement sans se préoccuper des cultes et des nationalités.

J'ai été à même de constater d'une façon exacte, que le but de M. Long en poursuivant son œuvre n'a été que celui de secourir l'humanité souffrante.

C'est pourquoi je me suis permis de le recommander d'une manière toute spéciale à votre Altesse qui nous est bien chère.

(Signé) ALI PACHA.

Inclosure 5 in No. 636.

Letter addressed by the Authorities of the Caza of Bazardjik to Ali Pasha.

Bazardjik, le 22 Avril, 1877.

M. le Gouverneur,

AU mois de Novembre dernier, votre Excellence m'a fait parvenir, par l'entremise du Gouverneur de Philippopolis, une lettre m'informant que j'avais à prêter tout mon concours à M. James Long, noble Anglais, qui venait en Bulgarie muni d'un Firman Impérial, dans le but de construire des habitations dans les villages ruinés pendant l'insurrection, et de distribuer des secours de toute espèce aux habitants.

Ayant adopté dans ce but la ville de Bazardjik comme centre de ces opérations ; en effet, aussitôt arrivé, M. Long s'est mis immédiatement à l'œuvre avec une ardeur remarquable.

Il a entrepris à la fois la réconstruction de plusieurs villages où il s'est rendu lui-même très fréquemment.

Il a distribué aussi une grande quantité de semences et de vêtements à tous ceux qui souffraient sans jamais leur demander leur race ni leur religion, il a rendu ainsi un vrai service à l'humanité.

Il a construit de plus un grand nombre d'écoles pour les enfants de tous cultes et de toutes nationalités, autant Musulmans que Chrétiens.

Aussi toutes les populations sont restées contentes des efforts de M. Long, et en garderont pour lui une reconnaissance éternelle.

(Signé) Par toutes les Autorités du Caza de Bazardjik.

No. 637.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, May 23*, 1877.

GOVERNOR of Ardahan supposed to have been bribed. See my despatch No. 80. An attempt is, I hear, being made to bribe Governor and people of Kars. Grand Duke goes to Alexandropol.

No. 638.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 25*, 1877, 4:30 P.M.

I HAVE induced Minister for Foreign Affairs to declare that the Porte will direct Nassir Pasha, of Busra, not to interfere with the island in the Euphrates, provided the Persians will engage not to raise any buildings upon it until the question of ownership be decided. Persian Minister considers the proposal fair and has promised to recommend his Government, by telegraph, to accept it. A word from your Lordship at Tehran would be useful. The only other question at this moment between Persia and Turkey is the removal of Abbas Mirza from Bagdad, to which the Shah appears to attach an exaggerated importance. I have telegraphed to Consul-General at Bagdad to make every effort to get the Prince to agree to the proposal of the Porte that he should come to Constantinople as a visitor if he will not consent to go elsewhere. I should be glad if you would telegraph to him in the same sense. I have begged Persian Minister not to raise any other question, and he has promised not to do so, but, of course, I cannot say that he will not. Porte seems disposed to send an Ambassador to Tehran at once, and if a proper man were selected for the post it would be a good thing for it to do so.

I have sent above to Tehran.

No. 639.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 25*, 1877, 5 P.M.

I HAVE urged Grand Vizier to take immediate steps to inquire into circumstances of the escape of the Greek brigands from Janina, about which Mr. Stuart has written to your Lordship, and to punish Hussein Pasha if it is proved that he connived at it. His Highness has promised to do this.

No. 640.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, May 26*, 1877, 8 A.M.

THE Viceroy, before officially promulgating new regulations for the Suez Canal in accordance with the last decision of the Porte, as reported in my telegram of the 22nd instant, asks if Her Majesty's Government have any objections thereto, or any modifications to propose, and offers to adopt and urge as his own at Constantinople the views of Her Majesty's Government before it is too late. I have conveyed to the Viceroy the sense of your Lordship's despatch No. 68 of the 16th instant.

No. 641.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 26, 1877, 11·30 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, I now find Hobart Pasha was unable to leave yesterday.

No. 642.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 26, 1877.*

THE following is from trustworthy sources:—Division of the 9th Russian Corps crosses Alnta River to-day for Kalafat, whence Widdin will be shelled at an early date with the heaviest guns by Russians and Roumanians, and, if possible, be rendered untenable.

No. 643.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, May 26, 1877.*

IT it reported to me that the Russians are not making long or extensive contracts for corn. On all sides it is reported that there is an impression at the Russian head-quarters that Russia may, perhaps, be disposed to treat, and will not cross the Danube. I do not know whether these rumours have any significance.

No. 644.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 146.)
My Lord, *Washington, May 15, 1877.*

WITH reference to Sir Edward Thornton's despatch No. 143, of the 7th instant, in which he informed your Lordship that the Turkish Minister had made a formal declaration to the United States' Government of the breaking out of hostilities between Turkey and Russia, I have the honour to report that on the 9th instant M. Shishkine, the Russian Minister, called at the State Department just as Mr. Evarts happened to be starting to accompany the President to Philadelphia, and in the course of conversation stated that his country was at war with the Sultan.

I learn from Mr. Seward that the United States' Government does not look upon that communication as sufficiently formal to require a written answer, such as was given to the Turkish Minister, but it will be given whenever the Russian Minister makes the communication in writing.

The Turkish Secretary tells me that Aristarchi Bey, who is at present residing in New York, has protested against the idea that a written declaration from the Russian Minister must precede the issue by the United States' Government of any proclamation of neutrality; for, he argues, it would be the interest of Russia never to make that declaration at all, and especially not so long as the Russian fleets are lying at New York and San Francisco.

The fleet at New York will sail to-morrow under sealed orders, and I find a strong suspicion current that some pressure has been used to expedite their departure, and that the United States' Government, as soon as they are gone, will define its position as neutral more clearly than would have been courteous to the Imperial fleet while lying in American waters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 645.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 26, 1877, 4 P.M.*

RUSSIAN troops have already some difficulty in obtaining provisions even in this country. Meat and forage very scarce.

No. 646.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 26, 1877, 5 P.M.*

OUR Vice-Consul in Little Wallachia reports to me that he has secret information that measures are being ordered which would indicate that a Russian force might cross the Danube at Pristolu, above Widdin, and take the line of the Timoc.

No. 647.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, May 26, 1877, 4 P.M.*

A TURKISH turret-ship struck a torpedo and was lost near Ibraila this morning. Russian Circassian troops are being sent back towards Russia. Weather wet. River high.

No. 648.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 26, 1877.*

FOLLOWING from Military Secretary at Erzeroom, Friday afternoon:—

"Returned yesterday morning from Bardek. Russian reconnaissance reported towards Penek and Olti, and in direction of Van, but main body apparently attempting capture of Kars. Very little progress made here for completion of earthworks towards Hassan Kale and on Olti road. Heavy guns and ammunition on the road from Trebizond, thanks to Hamil Pasha; but so many of the wheels of the gun-carriages found rotten, looks like foul play. No news of garrison of Ardahan. All, with the exception of some 500 fugitives, supposed to be captured."

No. 648*.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 26, 1877, 11 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I had already made representations about transmission of official telegrams, and the Porte had given orders that they should be received. I have spoken again on the subject, and Circular orders have been sent to Asia and European Turkey that "all telegrams from British officials should be accepted and transmitted to their respective destinations."

No. 649.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, May 26, 1877.*

GENERAL FRANKINI gone to Tehran to induce Persia to take part against Turkey.

No. 650.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 27, 1877, 1·45 P.M.*

I HAVE seen the draft of the Encyclical addressed by the Greek Patriarch to the metropolitans, bishops, and faithful of the Greek Church, which will be published immediately. It denounces the war waged by Russia as unjust and unnecessary, and as not being made in the interest of the Christians, and it calls upon the Greeks to support the Sultan. Such an appeal has never before been addressed to the Greeks by the Greek Church, and may have great effect, even in Russia. I believe it to be quite spontaneous, and it affords a very remarkable proof of the real feeling among the Christians in this country.

No. 651.

Sir J. Walsham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Madrid, May 27, 1877, 3 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL at Cartagena reports arrival there on the 24th instant, from Spezia, of Russian man-of-war "Petropaulovski," carrying thirty-four guns, and with crew of 650 men. She remains in port, her Captain having left for Madrid.

No. 652.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *St. Petersburgh, May 27, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

RUSSIAN Ambassador at Vienna will arrive here to-night, and his report of the views of the Austrian Government will decide nature of the answer of the Russian Government to your Lordship's letter to Russian Ambassador in London.

I have had an interview with the Russian Ambassador to London this morning. He will leave on Sunday next for London, and he hopes that the answer (?) he will be able to give will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government. He considers that the Dardanelles question cannot be treated by Russia and Turkey alone; but in concert with Europe. He assured me that terms of future peace will be concerted with European Powers. As regards Roumanian independence, Russia, he says, disapproves it, and will take no steps in regard to it without European concert. I could perceive that doubts are entertained of Austria, and fears that England will be influenced by her as regards future organisation of Christian provinces of Turkey.

No. 653.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 27, 1877, 7 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroom, dated to-day:—

"Bombardment at Kars, after continuing at intervals for three days, has ceased. Convoy of twelve carts, and one of forty-six horses, and ammunition proceeding to Van taken by Russians near Ertich. Head-quarters of Van division reported at Baghiri. Russian column from left wing advancing towards it. Frequent skirmishes between outposts. Decisive action expected. Russian scouts seen close to Olti. Sabri Pasha, commander of the forces at Ardahan, reported to have fled before assault. Few of the garrison escaped. Eighty-four heavy guns, four field batteries, and some mountain-guns were taken. Orders sent to bring Government property at Olti to this.

No. 654.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 249.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 17, 1877.*

I AM privately informed that the Emperor of Russia intends proceeding with the Grand Duke Vladimir (on his return from a short visit to the Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna in Switzerland), and the Grand Duke Serge to the headquarters of the army in Roumania, which is at present at Ploeschti.

It is surmised that the Emperor is anxious to be near the seat of war for the purpose of profiting of the first favourable opportunity which may present itself for concluding peace.

I have the honour to report that Count Schouvaloff arrived here last evening.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 655.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 254. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 21, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to receive by post on the 11th instant your Lordship's despatch No. 176 of the 7th instant, inclosing copy of a letter you had addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the protection of British interests in the East, and to the limits within which they are prepared to maintain a policy of abstention and neutrality.

I considered it of essential importance to abstain from any mention of or reference to this important document either to Prince Gortchakow, or any other official persons, until Count Schouvaloff's arrival, and until he should have been able to communicate personally with Prince Gortchakow, and furnish any verbal explanations in furtherance of the object desired.

But on the 11th instant, at the reception of the Corps Diplomatique by the Grand Duke Serge, Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, informed me that he had that morning received an important telegram from Rome (which later in the day he communicated to me) mentioning the letter your Lordship had addressed to Count Schouvaloff, and enumerating the several points referred to in it.

It appears that this information had been transmitted to Rome by Count Launay, the Italian Ambassador at Berlin, to whom it had been communicated by Baron Bülow the Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

I told the Chevalier Nigra that as he was officially informed of the substance of your Lordship's letter to Count Schouvaloff, I could not deny it; at the same time I stated that I had been already some days in possession of it, and that I had carefully avoided even referring to it with Prince Gortchakow, not wishing to forestall and possibly prejudice the delicate communication with which Count Schouvaloff was charged.

I likewise suggested to Chevalier Nigra the desirableness of maintaining secrecy in regard to this matter, and of not speaking of it to Prince Gortchakow until Count Schouvaloff had arrived, and his Excellency agreed to this suggestion.

At an interview this day with Prince Gortchakow, I referred to your Lordship's letter to Count Schouvaloff, and His Highness requested me to inform your Lordship by telegraph that the Emperor fully appreciated the frankness of the exposition of the views of Her Majesty's Government contained in your Lordship's letter of the 6th instant. His words were, "L'Empereur sait gré à Lord Derby pour la franchise avec laquelle il a exposé les vues du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté;" and that the Imperial Government would evince the same frankness in the answer which was being prepared, and of which Count Schouvaloff would be the bearer.

His Highness then said that he should preserve complete secrecy in regard to the answer to your Lordship's letter, and should not even communicate it to the Austrian or German Governments. He added that Count Schouvaloff would leave for London a few days after the Emperor's departure for the headquarters of the army in Roumania, which would be on the 2nd of June (N.S.).

I here observed that this delay in the receipt by your Lordship of the reply to

your letter appeared to me somewhat long, inasmuch as important English interests were at stake.

Prince Gortchakow replied that Count Schouvaloff was now entirely occupied with bringing to a satisfactory issue the important questions referred to in your Lordship's letter, adding, "C'est le meilleur avocat que vous puissiez avoir." He added that he required to remain some days after the Emperor's departure for the arrangement of his private affairs.

His Highness spoke of his leaving five or six days after the Emperor, from which it may be inferred that Count Schouvaloff can scarcely arrive in England before the middle of June, by which time I have no doubt that Prince Gortchakow has calculated that the Russian army will have crossed the Danube and have advanced on its march towards the Balkan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

May 23.

P.S.—Since addressing the foregoing to your Lordship, I am informed that the Emperor has expressed his wish to Count Schouvaloff that he should leave for England on the same day that His Majesty leaves for the head-quarters of the army, namely, the 3rd of June.

Count Schouvaloff may consequently be expected in London on the 8th or 9th of June.

A. L.

No. 656.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 258.)
My Lord,

St. Petersburgh, May 21, 1877.

SINCE addressing to your Lordship my despatch No. 249 of the 17th of May, I am informed by Prince Gortchakow that the Emperor has changed the day of his intended departure for the head-quarters of the army in Roumania from the 8th to the 2nd of June.

His Majesty has requested Prince Gortchakow to accompany him, and it is supposed that His Majesty will remain in the vicinity of the head-quarters of the army for several months. Prince Gortchakow said that at his great age the fatigue would be very trying to him. He could not, under the present grave circumstances, hesitate in obeying the wishes of his Sovereign.

The Grand Duke Wladimir will have the command of a division, and the Grand Duke Serge will take active service in the army.

The Imperial Court remove from this to Czarskoe-Selo on Wednesday next.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 657.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 261.)
My Lord,

St. Petersburgh, May 22, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship herewith an interesting account of the countries in Turkey in Asia now forming the theatre of military operations, which is taken from the "Invalide Russe," the Russian military organ.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 657.

Extract from the "Invalide Russe."

THÉATRE DE LA GUERRE EN ASIE.—Malgré son étendue nous croyons devoir donner, dans l'intérêt de nos lecteurs étrangers qui suivent les événements militaires dans la

Turquie d'Asie, la description suivante du théâtre de ces événements que "l'Invalide" emprunte exclusivement aux ouvrages des explorateurs Russes :—

"On sait que toute la région nord-est de l'Asie-Mineure est occupée par le plateau de l'Arménie; le centre de ce plateau est formé par une série de chaînes de montagnes parallèles qui aboutissent à l'est aux montagnes du Caucase et de la Perse et s'étendent vers l'ouest le long du littoral et vers l'intérieur de l'Anatolie. Presque au centre du plateau est située, à une altitude de 6,000 pieds au-dessus du niveau de la mer, la ville d'Erzeroum, dans le voisinage de laquelle prennent naissance presque tous les principaux cours d'eau de l'Asie-Mineure qui se dirigent vers la Mer Noire, la Caspienne, et le Golfe Persique. Faisons observer, sans nous arrêter à une description détaillée du relief de l'Asie-Mineure, que le pays se présente en général sous forme d'une suite de terrasses qui vont en s'abaissant sous la direction de l'est au sud-est.

"Le Vilayet d'Erzeroum, qui touche au nord-ouest à celui de Trébizonde, au nord-est et à l'est à la Russie et à la Perse, et au sud et à l'ouest aux Vilayets de Bagdad et de Sivas, occupe le plateau Arménien, coupé par des chaînes de montagnes séparées les unes des autres par de petites plaines,—les vallées des rivières et des lacs. Toutes ces chaînes ont une direction parallèle, leurs versants sont très-escarpés et rocheux, ce qui rend difficile l'établissement de routes, tandis que les sommets des montagnes forment des plateaux couverts d'une belle végétation, ce qui favorise l'élevage des moutons et des bêtes à cornes. Les montagnes du vilayet appartiennent à deux systèmes différents: sa partie septentrionale est couverte de montagnes qui se rejoignent à la chaîne principale du Caucasse; dans la partie méridionale se trouvent les montagnes connus dans l'antiquité sous les noms de Taurus et d'Antitaurus, et qui sont des ramifications éloignées de l'Himalaya. La ligne de démarcation entre ces deux systèmes est formée par l'Arax, le Kara-Sou et le Kialkit, qui se jette dans la Mer Noire. Aux environs d'Erzeroum il existe un point de jonction entre les deux systèmes formés par un passage de montagne portant le nom de Dévé-Boïnou. Les points les plus élevés de l'Arménie atteignent une hauteur de 16,000 pieds. Les cours d'eau sont nombreux dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum, presque tous les fleuves et rivières de l'ancienne Arménie, du Kourdistan et de la Mésopotamie y prennent naissance. L'un de ces fleuves, le Tchorath-Sou, appartient au bassin de la Mer Noire; la Koura et l'Arax se jettent dans la Mer Caspienne; le Golfe Persique enfin reçoit des hauteurs de l'Arménie les deux bras de l'Euphrate et le bras oriental du Tigre, qui appartient au vilayet dans son cours supérieur. Le Tchorakh-Sou prend naissance sur les versants des montagnes élevées de Kazan-Bachi, non loin des sources de l'Euphrate, et se jette dans la Mer Noire près de Batoum, en suivant la direction du nord-ouest. Ce fleuve, qui reçoit des deux côtés de nombreux affluents, forme une vallée occupée dans la partie moyenne et inférieure de son cours par des vignes et des vergers; en maints endroits les pentes des montagnes sont ensemencées de froment et d'orge. Sur divers points les bords du fleuve sont couverts d'épaises forêts. Le Tchorakh-Sou possède une largeur de quinze à trente toises; des gués n'existent qu'en amant d'Arvine. La Koura sort des montagnes de Bouga-Tapa et reçoit plusieurs affluents dans les limites du vilayet; elle entre ensuite dans la vallée d'Ardahan et se dirige vers le district d'Akhaltsyk; dans son cours supérieur les bords de la Koura sont bas, puis, à mesure qu'elle avance dans son cours, la rivière s'encaisse dans des rives qui deviennent de plus en plus escarpées. Il n'existe que peu de ponts sur la Koura, les gués par contre sont en nombre suffisant. Les sources de l'Arax se composent de plusieurs cours d'eau qui descendent des versants septentrionaux du Bingel Dagh; cette rivière, dont le courant est très-rapide, se dirige vers notre frontière en recevant quelques affluents importants, parmi lesquels l'Arpatchaï, qui forme la ligne de démarcation entre le trans-Caucase et le territoire Ottoman; l'Arpatchaï reçoit à son tour le Kars-Tchaï, dont le cours forme la spacieuse vallée de Kars. L'Arax est traversé par plusieurs ponts en pierre, les gués y sont nombreux. Toutes ces rivières ne possèdent aucune valeur comme voies de communication tandis qu'elles peuvent entraver, souvent d'une manière toute inattendue, en temps de crue, la marche des armées. Les plaines du vilayet sont en général très-fertiles et c'est là que se concentre principalement la population du pays. Entourées de toutes parts de montagnes, ces plaines offrent aux Turcs des avantages considérables au point de vue de la défense; ce sont comme autant de camps retranchés dont il n'y a qu'à protéger les défilés. Les plus importantes des plaines sont celles d'Erzeroum, de Kars, d'Ersindjan (cette dernière est extrêmement fertile), celle de Bayazid et de Mousch, la plus étendue de toutes.

"Les voies de communication de l'Asie Mineure se trouvent en général dans un fort mauvais état. Cela tient en partie à l'habitude qu'on a d'opérer tous les transports à

dos de bêtes de somme, et c'est de cette manière que se fait jusqu'à présent le service de la poste entre Erzeroum et Trébizonde, bien que dans les derniers temps une chaussée relie ces deux villes. Le centre de toutes les voies de communication du vilayet est Erzeroum, d'où partent toutes les routes qui aboutissent aux principales villes de la province. Erzeroum est située sur la grande voie de transit reliant les ports de la Mer Noire avec les provinces Asiatiques de la Turquie et avec la Perse. La chaussée de Trébizonde à Erzeroum a une étendue de 280 verstes et a coûté au Gouvernement Turc 1,750,000 roubles. Une seconde chaussée en voie de construction va de Batoum à Kars. Des routes ordinaires enfin se dirigent d'Erzeroum sur Ardahan, Kars, Ersindjan, Mousch, Bitlis, et Van.

"Les chemins importants au point de vue des opérations de notre armée partent de notre frontière dans les directions suivantes: d'Ozourguéty à Batoum, deux routes (50 verstes), d'Akhaltsyk et d'Akhalkalaki à Ardahan (100 verstes), d'Alexandropol à Kars, trois routes (70 verstes), du Gouvernement d'Erivan à Bayazid, deux routes (135 verstes). Un service postal régulier ne fonctionne qu'entre Erzeroum et Trébizonde. Des lignes télégraphiques rattachent Erzeroum à Trébizonde, Sivas (voie de Constantinople), Kars, Mousch, Bitlis, Van et Bayazid; l'étendue du réseau télégraphique du vilayet est de 900 verstes. Grâce à sa situation élevée, le climat du Vilayet d'Erzeroum est modéré, sec, et en général des plus salubres. Des différences notables de la température moyenne peuvent être constatées selon le degré d'élévation des localités. Dans les régions basses on cultive le coton, le riz, et l'olivier. Dans la plaine d'Erzeroum, qui possède une altitude de 6,398 pieds au-dessus du niveau de la mer, l'hiver dure depuis la fin de Novembre jusqu'au commencement de Mars; la température moyenne pendant cette saison est de 3·2°; le froid ne descend jamais au-dessous de 18° R. Les neiges sont toujours très abondantes. L'été est extrêmement chaud, la température moyenne est de + 19° R.; la chaleur atteint pendant la journée jusqu'à 35° et le thermomètre tombe dans la nuit à 12° et même à 9°. La population du vilayet est évaluée à 610,000 habitants des deux sexes; sur ce nombre on compte 183,000 Chrétiens, savoir: 157,500 Arméniens, 2,800 Grecs, et 22,600 Nestoriens. La population Musulmane se subdivise comme suit: Turcs, 190,000; Kurdes, 207,000; Kizilbachis, 25,000; Tatares, 2,900; Tcherk-sses, 2,700.

"Nous terminons notre résumé par quelques renseignements sur les villes principales du vilayet.

"Erzeroum a une population de 60,000 âmes; ses moyens de défense consistent en des forts détachés, la forteresse proprement dite, et la citadelle. Les forts sont disposés sur les hauteurs de Kap-Dagh et de Kérémeng-Dagh, très-favorables à la défense; quelques-uns de ces forts possèdent des casemates voûtées. La forteresse proprement dite se compose d'une enceinte qui entoure la ville et mesure onze verstes et demie de longueur, elle possède onze bastions rattachés entre eux par des courtines. La hauteur du rempart est de 15 à 21 pieds, son épaisseur de 25 à 30 pieds; le fossé d'enceinte mesure 77 pieds en largeur et de 10 à 24 pieds en profondeur. La citadelle, construite au centre de la place et entourée d'un vieux mur flanqué de treize tourelles, n'est pas en état d'offrir une grande résistance. La défense de la ville exige 150 pièces d'artillerie et une garnison de 20,000 hommes. En 1829 le Feldmaréchal Prince Paskévitch, après avoir battu à Saganlong deux corps Turcs, s'empara d'Erzeroum sans rencontrer de résistance; il est vrai qu'à cette époque la ville n'était que très-faiblement fortifiée. Les fortifications de Kars se sont accrues à la suite de chacune de nos guerres avec la Turquie. A l'heure qu'il est, Kars se compose d'une vieille forteresse qu'il a été décidé de démolir, d'une citadelle située au centre de la place, et de onze forts détachés, disposés sur un terrain très-favorable à la défense, sur une ligne circulaire dont le rayon mesure 1,300 toises. Kars, tant comme Erzeroum, exige une garnison de 20,000 hommes et 150 pièces pour l'armement de ses forts. La population de la ville est de 20,000 habitants. Batoum est situé au fond de la baie du même nom. Du côté de la terre la place est protégée par une rangée de forts. C'est la ville la plus considérable du Lasistan, avec une population de 30,000 âmes, composée de Turcs, de Grecs, et d'Arméniens."

No. 658.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 28.*)

(No. 265.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 23, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 190 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum by Mr. Doria, whom I had requested to call upon M. de Giers, and to take the opportunity of eliciting from his Excellency any information he could obtain regarding General Fadaiew's recent visit to Servia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 658.

Memorandum by Mr. Doria.

M. de GIERS informed me that on a former occasion he had requested General Fadaiew in the interests of the Government to keep quiet and not interfere in Servia by exciting the Slave movement, particularly as the Austrian Government was extremely sensitive and jealous on this matter, and their relations were not very favourable.

M. de Giers read to me a portion of a letter just received from General Fadaiew, in which he reproaches His Excellency for using the same argument that Servia was now tranquil, and that their relations with Austria were progressing favourably, as a reason for dissuading the General from any attempts to cause excitement and disturbance in Servia.

M. de Giers went on to say that General Fadaiew was a person of some talent, but not possessed of judgment for any practical use, and his Excellency added that he was not a person on whose services the Russian Government can rely. M. de Giers informed me that the General was now in St. Petersburgh.

No. 659.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May 28.*)

(No. 266. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 23, 1877.*

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF did me the honour to call on me on the 19th instant.

His Excellency stated that he had passed 24 hours with Prince Bismarck at Friedrichsruhe, and that nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurances he received from him on Eastern affairs, without stating of what nature, but adding "provided that they were fulfilled."

I imagine that they may have referred to the mouths of the Danube, for Count Schouvaloff observed that two years ago Prince Bismarck had stated to him that Germany had no interest whatever as regarded the mouths of the Danube, except in as far as this question affected Austria, and that so long as Austria and Russia were agreed, Germany would raise no objections.

Count Schouvaloff said that Prince Bismarck repeated to him the other day the same observations, and I suspect that the subject of their conversation may have referred to the strip of territory in Bessarabia ceded by Russia in 1856.

Count Schouvaloff then spoke on the subject of your Lordship's note to him previous to leaving London, and to the various points therein referred to.

He said that it had made no disagreeable impression on the mind of the Emperor, and he did not consider that there was any point on which the Russian Government could not give a satisfactory reply.

As regarded Egypt and the Suez Canal, there would be no hesitation in giving the most tranquillizing assurances to England.

With regard to the interests on the Persian Gulf, Count Schouvaloff also considered that in view of the assurances given by the Emperor, there could be no fear of any differences with England, and the same applied equally to Constantinople.

There was only one point on which a divergence of views might exist between the two Governments, and it was on that referring to the navigation of the Dardanelles.

He entered into no particulars as to the cause or motive for such divergence, and I merely surmise that he referred to the free passage of the Dardanelles to be claimed for Russian ships of war.

He seemed entirely to repudiate the idea of any territorial changes on the Asiatic frontier, and rejected any possibility of injury to British interests in that quarter.

I had a further conversation with Count Schouvaloff after dinner yesterday at my house.

His Excellency told me that he had been present at a meeting of the Ministers at the Winter Palace to consider the reply to be made to your Lordship's note, and he thought that it would be one satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

In the course of conversation I observed to him that it was undeniable that the position of Constantinople might be menaced the moment the Danube was passed by an invading army; but it was evident that, if a victorious army crossed the Balkan, it was impossible to say that it could be stopped within sight of the Turkish capital.

Count Schouvaloff denied any intention of going to Constantinople, and considered that it would be impossible to take any engagement which might fetter or restrain the military operations without the previous certainty that the Turks would consent to the terms of peace. Then, again, he observed, atrocities might occur south of the Balkan, or at Adrianople, which would render it necessary to afford succour to the Christian population; but he thought that the object of restricting the military operations might be obtained in another way. For instance, after some decisive engagement before crossing the Balkans, conditions of peace previously arranged with the European Powers might be offered to the Porte, and pressed on its acceptance with the whole weight of the other European Powers. He mentioned this as purely a personal opinion, and not that of his Government.

He stated that, in his opinion, if the Russian army crossed the Balkan, the Turkish Empire in Europe was gone; but, in saying so, he stated very categorically that the great wish of the Imperial Government was to maintain the Turkish Empire, and that it would be a sore embarrassment if it should be dissolved.

I rather suspect that certain conditions of a peace are being now discussed, and that possibly they will be intrusted to Count Schouvaloff as constituting in that form an engagement towards England for the safeguard of her interests, and as the means of inducing her to maintain a passive attitude.

Count Schouvaloff, however, said that nothing had yet been decided as to the reply to be given to your Lordship's note, which was still under consideration.

From information I have received from other quarters, I am convinced that the Russian Government will demand from Turkey, at the conclusion of peace, the free navigation for Russian ships of war through the Dardanelles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 660.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 267. Secret.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 23, 1877.*

SINCE the European concert has been broken up by the declaration of war against Turkey by Russia, the Eastern question has entered on a new phase, the gravity of which, for the interests of Great Britain, cannot be overrated.

Vast armies have been put in movement in Europe and Asia, the enthusiasm of the Russian nation has been excited to the highest degree, and the Czar is proclaimed beforehand the "liberator" of the Christian populations in the East from the Turkish yoke.

The magnitude of the Russian armaments is in harmony with the magnitude of the object in view, which is the subjection of Turkey to Russian domination, and the reduction of the Ottoman Empire to a Russian province.

There can be no doubt that the "occupation," I will not say "acquisition," of

Constantinople is the aim to which every Russian's thought is turned, and which, unless timely defensive measures are taken, will be realized at no distant date.

The solemn assurances given by the Emperor that he has no intention to "acquire" Constantinople does not preclude the possibility of a provisional occupation of that capital; and, although I place every confidence in the solemn professions of His Imperial Majesty, many incidents may happen in the course of the present war which may not only give a plausible excuse for his doing so, but may render it necessary for the protection of the Christian populations and the maintenance of public order.

In the present grave circumstances it is necessary that England should be prepared for all eventualities. She has vital interests in the East to defend, and cannot suffer that those interests should depend on assurances, however sincere, or on declarations however binding, the fulfilment of which is exposed to the uncertain chapter of incidents.

The experience of past months has fully proved that negotiations have hitherto only resulted in strengthening the policy of Russia as regards the East, and whilst the Cabinets of Europe have been engaged in endeavouring to arrive at a pacific solution of the Eastern complications, Russia has been occupied in assembling and preparing vast armies for the conflict which she had pre-determined, and for the realisation of those ambitious designs which for years past have been the aim of her Government. She has assiduously and skilfully induced Europe to believe in her pacific intentions, and, even up to the signature of the London Protocol, buoyed herself with the hope that she had at last obtained an European sanction to be the executor of the will of Europe.

It cannot be denied that the policy of Austria and Germany, more especially of the latter, has greatly contributed to encourage Russia in the line of policy she has pursued.

Count Andrassy, in the very difficult position which Austria holds, has never had the firmness to resist the proposed Russian armed intervention, and Prince Bismarck, on the other hand, has done everything in his power to encourage it. I very much doubt whether either of these Powers would take any decisive measures to arrest the Russian army at the Balkans, or would interfere in the event of its marching on Constantinople.

Austria might possibly be anxious and disposed to do so to safeguard her own interests, but Germany, as the ally of Russia, will interfere to prevent her.

Consequently, should the safety of Constantinople be menaced by a Russian army, England alone can prevent it falling into Russian hands.

It is evident to me that the object of Prince Gortchakow is to temporise, to gain time by negotiation while the Russian armies are advancing, and to endeavour to lull England into a feeling of security by pacifying assurances and protestations against any intention of occupying Constantinople. Count Schouvaloff's visit to St. Petersburgh is, in my opinion, chiefly with a view to gain time, and this impression is confirmed by the earnest hope expressed to your Lordship before his departure that no step of a decisive character would be taken by Her Majesty's Government pending the explanations which he hoped to be able to supply.

It is evident that, if the Russians should occupy Constantinople, they will have the future of Turkey in their hands, and that they will be able to decide the question relating to the navigation of the Dardanelles as they may think fit.

The vital question, therefore, to consider is, at what stage of the advance of the Russian army into Turkey the interests of England in regard to Constantinople and the Dardanelles are menaced.

I have no hesitation in saying that the passage of the Danube by the vast army now assembled on its banks will be a direct menace to English interests, and that it should be the moment when England should take active and immediate measures for ensuring the safety of Constantinople from a Russian occupation.

I am firmly persuaded that it is the object of the Russian Government to induce England with the belief that after the first decisive engagement on crossing the Danube the Emperor will offer terms of peace, and they will further argue that until they reach the Balkans there can be no justification for alarm. But on a question of such vital importance to England, there should be no political speculation taken into account; and it is further to be considered that if England occupies a strong military defensive position on Turkish territory, she will be the better able to aid in the conclusion of a satisfactory peace.

Nor can I see that the measures which may be deemed necessary to safeguard the

interests of England in the East should be regarded in the light of an hostile act against Russia. On the contrary, I believe that an occupation of Constantinople and the Dardanelles by England for defensive purposes would be the surest means of coming to an understanding with Russia in regard to the future of Turkey, and may possibly be the means of saving Europe from more serious complications.

It ought to be viewed as a measure for insuring peace, and not for making war; for enabling England to have a commanding voice in the settlement of the Oriental Question; and for safeguarding the present and future interests of Great Britain in Europe and in Asia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 661.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 215. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, May 22, 1877.*

PRINCE BISMARCK arrived yesterday from the country on his way to Kissingen, and had an audience of the Emperor at 4 o'clock.

When I saw his Highness later on in the evening he renewed to me verbally the communication he had sent me through Herr von Bülow, and which I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 204, Secret, of the 17th instant, respecting the mission of M. de Gontaut Biron to Metz, and the attempts of the French Government to establish more intimate and confidential relations with Russia, and through Russia with Germany, in regard to Eastern affairs.

Prince Bismarck repeated word for word what Herr von Bülow had already said to me in his name, as reported to your Lordship in the above-mentioned despatch, but in the course of conversation he added some further information to the following effect:—

Germany, he said, had made no secret understanding or Treaty with Russia; she would maintain her independence, and would not entertain the offers of the French Government to enter into any secret or special understanding with Russia in regard to Eastern affairs. How Prince Gortchakow might receive the secret overtures of the French Government he did not know.

He wished Russia well out of her present difficulties and would give her what moral support he could, but Germany would not form part of a coalition of Powers for any special purpose, and he hoped other Powers would refrain from joining coalitions against Germany.

Above all he wished to keep on terms of friendship and goodwill with England and to join with Her Majesty's Government in taking advantage of the earliest opportunity to facilitate the re-establishment of peace between Russia and Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed). ODO RUSSELL.

No. 662.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 27, 1877, 10·45 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Consul Blunt, dated yesterday:—

"I arrived last night, and this morning presented to the Governor-General letter of the Grand Vizier about amnesty. Its instructions are in the sense promised by his Highness. Governor-General immediately telegraphed to Philippopolis and Sofia for detailed list of prisoners, and has assured me that he will do his best to give effect to the Sultan's humane intentions.

"Four days ago twenty-five Greek robbers, supposed to be from Greece, landed at Maronia, near Dedi-Agatch, and seized and carried off to the mountains in the vicinity a Greek notable and two policemen. A force of 200 men is in Spezia pursuing, and last account states that the robbers are surrounded."

No. 663.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 28, 1877, 11 A.M.*

FOLLOWING telegram from Sir A. Kemball, dated Erzeroum, 27th:—

"We hear that Penek part of army has retired on Olti, and Moukhtar Pasha from Bardek on Keupri-keui; forces from Delibaba and Melasgird also supposed to be retreating on Keupri-keui. Assault on Kars reported unsuccessful, but place invested."

No. 664.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 28, 1877.*

THE Prince of Servia will visit the Russian headquarters during sojourn of the Emperor in Roumania.

No. 665.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 28, 1877.*

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW has replied to my note on navigation of Danube in the same sense as to the Austrian Cabinet, stating that obstacles caused by war are only provisional; that Imperial Cabinet will do all that is possible to confine them in extent and duration within the limits necessitated by war, and engages to come to an understanding with the Austro-Hungarian Government to re-establish the freedom of the river at the earliest moment. Copy sent to-day by post.

No. 666.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 28, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

MR. LAYARD has telegraphed the terms to which he has obtained the consent of the Porte for the settlement of the question respecting the island in the Euphrates. These terms appear to Her Majesty's Government to be fair and just, and you will recommend Persian Government to accede to them.

I have instructed Colonel Nixon to endeavour to induce Abbas Mirza to go to Constantinople, if he will not go elsewhere.

No. 667.

The Earl of Derby to Colonel Nixon.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 28, 1877, 5 P.M.*

I AM informed that Shah of Persia attaches great importance to removal of Abbas Mirza from Bagdad. Endeavour to induce him to accept Porte's invitation to Constantinople, if he will not go elsewhere.

No. 668.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 28, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

DO you know anything of a menace of Herat by Persia, the report of which has reached Viceroy of India? Telegraph answer immediately.

No. 669.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(No. 38.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 28, 1877.*

I RECEIVED on the 26th instant a telegram from Mr. Layard, the contents of which had been telegraphed to you from Constantinople, stating that the Porte had, at his request, agreed to forbid any interference on the part of the Turkish authorities with the Island of Shalha, provided that the Persians would engage not to raise any buildings upon it until the question of the ownership of the island is decided. The Persian Minister at Constantinople concurred in this arrangement; and I have to instruct you to inform the Persian Government that it appears to Her Majesty's Government to be a fair and reasonable settlement, and which Persia would do well to accept until the question is formally decided.

It appears that the only other subject of discussion existing at this moment between the Turkish and Persian Governments is the residence of Prince Abbas Mirza at Bagdad; and as the Shah is said to attach great importance to the Prince's removal, I have instructed Colonel Nixon by telegraph to endeavour to induce his Highness to accept the Porte's proposal that he should visit Constantinople if he cannot be prevailed upon to go elsewhere.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 670.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 28, 1877.*

IT appears from the reports which have been received by Her Majesty's Government that His Majesty the Shah of Persia attaches much importance to the removal of Abbas Mirza from Bagdad; and with a view to facilitate the settlement of the questions now pending between Turkey and Persia, I have to instruct you to use your best endeavours to prevail upon the Prince to accept the Porte's invitation to visit Constantinople, should it be impossible to induce his Highness to go elsewhere.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 671.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29, 5·45 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *St. Petersburgh, May 29, 1877, 1·20 P.M.*

I HAVE received secret information that a Russian Admiral named Crown, appointed Russian Naval Agent in America, left very secretly for his post about two months ago, with instructions to purchase and equip in America vessels of "Alabama" class to act against English commerce in the event of war.

No. 672.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29.)

(Telegraphic.) *Crete, May 29, 1877.*

SACRILEGE of a Christian church by Turkish soldiers. Great indignation.

No. 673.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne.

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 29, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 12 of the 12th instant, relative to the state of affairs at Toultcha; and I have to convey to you my approval of your proceedings, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 674.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, May 26, 1877.*

PORTE should take care Kars be not taken by (bribery?); also that Kurds be not bribed. If necessary, please communicate to Constantinople. Circassians in revolt near Soukhoum Kaleh.

No. 675.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, May 29, 1877.*

CHAMBER met yesterday. M. Deligeorges having been defeated on election of President, resigned immediately. M. Coumoundouros has been requested to form a Government.

No. 676.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Baydad, May 29, 1877.*

PRINCE ABBAS MIRZA has agreed to go to Constantinople on condition that he is received with the same honours as previously. Ambassador states that these terms are not acceptable to Porte. Therefore I have told him to go (*sic*).

No. 677.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 9. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, May 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, relating to the unpopularity of Zia Pasha, the Governor-General.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 677.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Damascus, May 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, since the date of my despatch of the 18th March last, on the subject of Zia Pasha, the Governor-General of Syria, his Excellency's unpopularity among all classes and sects has

increased to such a degree that I must not be held to exaggerate when I say that he has not a friend in the country. His Excellency's want of urbanity and his irritability of temper, his practical ignorance of all matters of detail of administration, which he attempts to supply by theoretical ideas of government, applicable rather to a European than to a purely Oriental condition of things, and an unfortunate facility of wounding the "amour propre" or susceptibilities of almost all with whom he comes in contract with no profit, make his present position one of complete isolation.

Serious discussion with his Excellency on any matter either of business or of general interest is useless, owing to his inability or disinclination to enter into details, and correspondence on affairs of routine is left to subordinates, who take care not to diminish their chief's unpopularity by supplying his ignorance of rules and regulations, seeking rather to profit by it with a view to his ultimate discomfiture.

His Excellency, while pleading want of proper men and of funds, and the insecurity of his tenure of office, to remedy existing deficiencies, wants energy and knowledge to make the best of the materials he has within his reach, and consequently does nothing.

Meanwhile, the fanatical element of the officials make capital out of his Excellency's well-known dislike to the Capitulations, and of his theories of government, by seeking in every way to annul the former, and by doing nothing when foreign interests are advocated by Consuls.

Whether political reasons had anything to do with his Excellency's appointment to Syria and consequent removal from the capital, I know not, but it is difficult to conceive any other cause in view of his practical ignorance of administration and total want of tact. Should, however, any matter arise requiring energy and decisive action, it may be doubted whether, in his present position of isolation, and in the presence of the antipathy with which he is so generally regarded, he may be found equal to the occasion.

Meanwhile, serious intrigues against him are only prevented by the knowledge of the present critical position of the Empire, and which engrosses all minds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 678.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 10. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, May 14, 1877.*

REFERRING to my despatch No. 8 of the 29th April, reporting upon public affairs in this district, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, reporting that the Turkish Government had requisitioned the whole of the rural police of this vilayet for military service, and that the civil authorities had declined compliance in view of the questionable policy of the measure in a province constituted like Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 678.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Layard.

Damascus, May 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that orders have just been received here from the Sublime Porte to send forward immediately to the seat of war the whole of the rural police or mounted zaptiehs belonging to the vilayet. The Governor-General has replied by telegraph that in view of possible contingencies which may arise in a country like Syria, it would be most imprudent to carry out this instruction, and he has accordingly declined to do so.

My despatch of the 29th April will have demonstrated the extreme risk to the country, should this measure be persisted in.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

P. S.—Having no official cypher, I transmit this despatch under flying seal to Mr. Consul-General Eldridge, with a request that he will kindly telegraph its contents to your Excellency.

T. S. J.

No. 679.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 36. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, May 15, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch marked Confidential, which I addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 12th instant, relative to the administration of Zia Pacha, Governor-General of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 679.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Beyrout, May 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to bring to the notice of your Excellency, that although generally the state of Syria under the present exceptional circumstances may be considered as satisfactory, thanks to the good sense of the respectable and thinking part of the population and to the energy displayed by the subaltern authorities, yet the inertness, almost amounting to apathy, the lack of courtesy to those who approach him, and the want of administrative capacity and experience displayed by Zia Pasha, the present Governor-General of Syria, form the subject of general complaint of Moslems and Christians alike, and I feel that a grave responsibility will rest upon me if I neglect any longer to report upon this subject, which causes me and many others considerable anxiety.

I cannot help considering what deplorable consequences might ensue if the turn of events now passing should lead to any great agitation amongst the heterogeneous and easily excited population of Syria, without a vigorous hand to control them, and these are both wanting in Zia Pasha, although I must do the justice to his Excellency to state that from the limited personal intercourse I have had with him, I have a liking for him, and consider he is endued with a spirit of liberality and patriotism, and that he possesses considerable and perhaps rare talents, yet the absence of the capacity required in a Governor-General of such a province as Syria is most remarkable, and at the same time regrettable, so that if he is allowed to continue to administer, or more correctly speaking, to continue to neglect to administer, the important district confided to his charge, I greatly fear the consequences may be serious.

No doubt your Excellency has frequently met, as I have done, with men of great talents, who are constitutionally quite unfitted for the public service, and such a man is Zia Pasha; as an author, poet, or demagogue, he would undoubtedly succeed, when as an administrator he utterly fails, and of his failings I have reason to believe the persons who surround him take advantage for their own individual profit, and to his detriment.

In proof of what I say in this matter, I do not bring forward facts which would swell this despatch to an inordinate length, but I refer your Excellency to Mr. Vice-Consul Jago's despatch to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires of the 18th of March last, which, I confess, at the time I considered somewhat exaggerated, but I am now fully convinced of its *bona fides*, and a great deal more.

I sincerely regret having to report on this matter, but from a sense of public duty, I must say that I consider the further presence of Zia Pasha in his present capacity highly dangerous to the public peace and general security, and on these grounds think that his recall and his substitution by a more experienced and judicious successor, an absolute necessity for the maintenance of order in Syria, and by placing my opinion on record, I am anxious to relieve myself of all responsibility for what may happen,

although under other circumstances I should not consider the danger so imminent as I do now.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 680.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 43. Political.)
Scutari, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 12th instant I received a telegram from the Prince of Montenegro's Secretary asking me, in His Highness' name, to obtain from the Turkish authorities the acceleration of the transit of the grain through the Lake of Scutari, and which had been suspended for some days.

I was enabled to reply immediately that the Governor-General had resumed the transport of the grain to Ricka; but, a few days after, Mustafa Pasha sent to complain to me that a loudra, one of the lake craft, employed in the carriage of the grain had been cut out by some Montenegrins, during a dark night, from under the guns of Maksoot, a fort on one of the islands, and his Excellency said he felt inclined, under these circumstances, to discontinue the dispatch of grain to Ricka.

I immediately sent a telegraphic representation on the subject to Cettigné, and yesterday received an assurance that the loudra would be restored to the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 681.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 44. Political.)
Scutari, May 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies and translations of a letter and its inclosure received by me from Azarian Effendi, the Turkish functionary who concluded the arrangement with Montenegro about the revictualling of Niehsich, and who is now here superintending the transport of the Montenegrin grain to Ricka.

Azarian Effendi's letter communicates to me the copy of a telegram from the Commander-in-chief, Ali Saib Pasha, to the Governor-General, announcing that the last convoy returning from Niehsich to Spuz had been attacked by the Montenegrins, and had been robbed of forty-six horses. Ali Saib Pasha recalls to mind the fact that this convoy had been dispatched on the distinct assurance of Mr. Monson, conveyed through me, that the Prince of Montenegro guaranteed its safety not only to the Turkish Government but also to that of Her Majesty, and he directs that I may be informed of the steps he has ordered to be taken to indemnify the owners of the lost horses.

I at once begged Azarian Effendi to suspend all action in the matter until I could communicate on the subject with the Montenegrin authorities, and I dispatched the telegram, of which the inclosed is a copy, to M. Duby, Prince Nicholas' Secretary. Inclosure No. 6 is a copy of the reply I received in explanation of the occurrence complained of by the Turkish General, and as I was anxious that a matter in which Mr. Monson and I had been engaged, and in which the name of Her Majesty's Government had been used, should not fail through the irritation which evidently exists in Montenegro as well as here, I forwarded a further telegram to M. Duby, copy of which is herein inclosed, and have now received the announcement that thirty of the missing horses have been restored to the authorities at Spuz.

I need hardly state to your Lordship that the Turkish authorities are much annoyed at the treatment to which their people and their means of transport have suffered at the hands of the Montenegrins, and that the explanations given of the several occurrences have not allayed the sense of injury suffered. The Turks laugh at the distinction between Herzegovinians and Montenegrins made when the first number of horses alluded to were robbed, and deny that their men could be seized by

a sudden panic on Montenegrin territory whilst they were under the escort of Montenegrin guides.

I have been careful, however, to suppress in my communications with Montenegro the incredulity of the Turks, and to aim only at terminating satisfactorily an affair in which Her Majesty's officers became engaged when there was still a chance of obtaining peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 681.

Azarian Effendi to Consul Kirby Green.

M. le Consul,
Scutari, le $\frac{9}{21}$ *Mai*, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-joint la traduction de la dépêche de son Excellence le Commandant-en-chef de l'armée Impériale de Scutari, relative à l'enlèvement des chevaux faisant partie du dernier convoi de provisions expédiés à Niehsich.

Je me permets, M. le Consul, de vous rappeler la teneur du télégramme de M. Monson, en date du 20 Avril, télégramme dont vous avez bien voulu me transmettre copie, et qui nous informe de l'engagement que le Prince Nicolas prenait vis-à-vis du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique au sujet de la sécurité des susdits convois.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) AZARIAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 681.

Ali Saib Pasha to the Governor-General of Scutari.

(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.)
Podgoritza, le $\frac{5}{17}$ *Mai*, 1877.

LE Commandant de Spouz m'ayant informé télégraphiquement que le dernier convoi de provision à son retour de Niehsich avait été assailli par la population Monténégrine de la plaine de Bielopavlovic et que quarante-six de nos chevaux avaient été enlevé. J'ai écrit au susdit Commandant pour faire savoir au Natchalnik de Bielopavlovic que ce dernier convoi avait été expédié sur les garanties de sécurité données par le Prince du Monténégro à l'Agent du Gouvernement Anglais à Cettigné, et que si dans l'espace de deux jours les chevaux enlevés ne venaient pas à être restitués nous indemniserions leurs propriétaires par le maïs appartenant au Monténégro et que les autorités Impériales sont en train de transporter à Ricka. Dans sa dépêche responsive le Commandant de Spouz m'apprend que jusqu'à présent quatre de ces chevaux ont été retournés, ce qui reduit le nombre de chevaux enlevés à quarante-deux.

Considérant qu'il serait juste d'indemniser les propriétaires de ces quarante-deux chevaux, aussi que ceux des vingt-huit autres enlevés précédemment et dans les mêmes circonstances par des Monténégrins, je viens vous prier de vouloir bien sequestrer, du maïs appartenant au Monténégro, la quantité équivalante à 700 livres Turques pour indemniser les propriétaires des soixante-dix chevaux enlevés à raison de 10 livres Turques par cheval, et de porter cette décision à la connaissance du Consulat de Sa Majesté Britannique par l'entremise d'Azarian Effendi, en ayant soin de me communiquer la réponse que M. le Consul Anglais voudra bien faire à ce sujet.

(Translation.)

Ali Saib Pasha to the Governor-General of Scutari.

(Telegraphic.)
Podgoritza, May $\frac{5}{17}$, 1877.

THE Commandant of Spuz having telegraphically informed me that the last convoy of prisoners, on its return from Niehsich, had been assailed by the Montenegrin population in the plain of Bielopavlovic, and that forty-six of our horses had been carried off, I have written to the above-named Commandant to let the Natchalnik of

Bielopavlovic know that this last convoy had been sent on the guarantee of safety given by the Prince of Montenegro to the Agent of the English Government at Cettigné, and that if, within the term of two days, the horses that had been carried off were not restored, we would indemnify their owners through the maize belonging to Montenegro, and which the Turkish authorities are now occupied in transporting to Rieka. By his despatch in reply, the Commandant of Spuz informs me that up to the present four of these horses have been returned, which reduce the number of the horses carried off to forty-two.

Seeing that it would be just to indemnify the owners of these forty-two horses, as well as those of the twenty-eight others carried off before under the same circumstances by the Montenegrins, I have to beg you to sequester from the maize belonging to Montenegro a quantity equivalent to 700 Turkish pounds, in order to indemnify the owners of the seventy horses carried off, at the rate of 10 Turkish pounds per horse, and to make this decision known to the Consulate of Her Britannic Majesty through Azarian Effendi, taking care to communicate to me the answer which the English Consul may give on this subject.

Inclosure 3 in No. 681.

Azarian Effendi to Consul Kirby Green.

(Translation.)

Scutari, May 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herein the translation of the despatch of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief of the Imperial Army of Scutari, relative to the carrying off of horses forming part of the last convoy of provisions sent to Nichsich.

I venture, Sir, to remind you of the tenor of the telegram of Mr. Monson, dated the 20th April, copy of which you were good enough to send me, and which informs you of the engagement taken by Prince Nicholas towards the Government of Her Britannic Majesty on the subject of the above-named convoys.

Pray accept, &c

(Signed) AZARIAN.

Inclosure 5 in No. 681.

Consul Kirby Green to M. Duby.

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, May* 17, 1877, 7·40 P.M.

I BEG you to inform His Highness Prince Nicholas from my part that I have received a communication from the Turkish Commander-in-chief at Podgoritza to the effect that the last convoy which had carried provisions to Nichsich, whilst returning to Spuz was attacked and robbed of forty-six horses. Four only of these have been returned by the Prefect of Danilograd. His Excellency Ali Saib Pasha states that he has given orders that the value of the forty-two missing horses, as well as that of twenty-eight which were taken when the first complaint was made, shall be retained out of the maize here belonging to Montenegro.

I trust that, in consideration of the assurances given by Prince Nicholas to Mr. Monson, the impression of the Turkish authorities that the horses are entirely lost will not be verified, and that I shall be enabled, through their restitution, to induce the Commander-in-chief to rescind his orders for the retention of the value of the horses.

Inclosure 7 in No. 681.

M. Duby to Consul Kirby Green.

(Telegraphic.) *Cettigné, May* 18, 1877, 4·20 P.M.

I AM requested to inform you that facts have been misrepresented to you. They are as follows:—

The convoy to Nichsich stumbled unawares upon one of our posts near Visochitza. The convoy men took fright and fled headlong to Spuz, leaving horses behind. Our post secured part of the animals, which were immediately restored by the Nacahnik of Danilograd. Others stampeded, and are sought after for restitution. Thus for the facts.

As to the General's threat it is groundless. His Highness, however, requests me to say he never trusted Turks would faithfully carry out their promises.

Inclosure 8 in No. 681.

Consul Kirby Green to M. Duby.

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, May* 18, 1877, 10 P.M.

IN thanking you for the reply given to my telegram of last night, I must beg you to inform His Highness Prince Nicholas that it is my anxious wish to assist in removing all misunderstandings that may arise between the Montenegrins and Turkish authorities whilst the agreement about the revictualling of Nichsich and transit of the grain is being carried out, especially as Mr. Monson took an active part in the matter when he was at Cettigné.

His Highness must make allowances for the distrust that exists in the minds of the Turkish authorities through the tension of feelings produced by the state of war, and I count on the Prince's assistance to bear out my representations here that the temporary straying of a number of horses does not justify an immediate resort to measures which have the appearance of an arbitrary departure from the original agreement.

This evening the Mouchir informed me that twenty more of the horses had been sent into Spuz, and I hope that I shall have the satisfaction of seeing the original agreement completed, and feeling that I have been the means of proving that both Montenegrins and Turks have all through acted loyally up to their engagements.

No. 682.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 9. Political.)

My Lord, *Jerusalem, May* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that no fresh disorders have occurred since my last despatches, though the same conditions under which order may at any time be disturbed remain unchanged.

Twenty-four persons (one of them a female) have been arrested at Lydda for participation in the rioting on the 2nd instant, and are now undergoing their trial at Jaffa.

Instances of Moslem ill-feeling have occurred. As the funeral procession of a Latin monk was passing before the barracks occupied by the Redifs, two of the latter used insulting language and gestures. On the complaint of the French Consul they were punished with twenty-five lashes each, and one day's imprisonment. A German subject was assaulted by peasants on his way to Jaffa because the waggon he was riding on disturbed a flock of sheep.

The mounted gendarmerie have been ordered to hold themselves in readiness to embark. I am informed that their place will be supplied by men from the Mustahfiz who are to be called out. The Redifs apparently are remaining.

The new Governor of Jerusalem, Raouf Pasha, has arrived. All hope for a better administration of the country than under the last Governor.

The Russian Canccllier and the Archimandrite, head of the Russian ecclesiastical mission at Jerusalem, and who appeared in no hurry to leave, have been required to quit the country by order from Constantinople, and have accordingly done so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 683.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 92. Political.)

Bucharest, May 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I BEG to inform your Lordship that there is no truth whatever in the report in the Berlin correspondence of the "Times" of Monday, the 14th instant, that Prince Tcherkasky is organizing a legion of 30,000 Bulgarians at the Russian head-quarters at Ploesci.

An effort has been made by the Bulgarian Committee at this place to enrol Bulgarian volunteers, but with a signal want of success, 1,000 or so having only responded to the invitation, and those would appear to have been Bulgarians who were already at the behest of the Committee during the Servian war.

The report is all the more ridiculous from the circumstance that Prince Tcherkasky is not a military man.

Your Lordship will doubtless recollect that the Prince was the moving spirit in the Comité Organisateur in Poland immediately after the insurrection; he took infinite interest in the Panslavist Congress at Moscow in 1868; and it is understood that, as the Russian armies advance into Bulgaria, he will study the land question, and prepare a scheme for redistribution of the land in the same sense as was carried by Stein in Prussia at the beginning of the present century, and in the Kingdom of Poland by the Ukase of March 1854.

I take this opportunity of pointing out to your Lordship the inaccuracy of the information respecting this country which is being furnished by the "Times'" correspondents at Vienna and Berlin, more especially by the latter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 684.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 95. Political.)

Bucharest, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that yesterday the independence of Roumania was adopted in principle by both Chambers.

M. Cogalniceano took his stand on the arguments set forth in his late Circular to the Roumanian Agents abroad, which has been transmitted to your Lordship through Lord Lyons, viz., that the Porte has severed the ties which connected the two countries, and that the Moldo-Wallachian Government is virtually in a state of war with the Ottoman Empire.

The following is the text of the resolution voted by the Chamber:—

"The Chamber, satisfied with the explanations given by the Government respecting their policy in consequence of the vote of the 11th May, notes that war between Roumania and Turkey, that the breaking off of our relations with the Porte, and the absolute independence of Roumania, have received official realization, and, counting on the justice of the Guaranteeing Powers, passes to the order of the day."

A fresh note will be addressed to the Guaranteeing Powers, but it appears to me doubtful whether for the moment any change of title will be assumed by Prince Charles.

It has also been decided by the Chambers that the sum set aside for the tribute to the Porte is to be appropriated to the budget of the Minister of War.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 685.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 269.)

St. Petersburgh, May 25, 1877

My Lord,

BARON LANGENAU, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at this Court, called on me on the 23rd instant, and communicated to me a dispatch from his Government on the subject of the navigation of the Danube, which he was instructed to bring under the notice of the Imperial Government.

This despatch, of which I have the honour to annex a copy, commences by referring to the military operations now going on, which must naturally interfere with commerce and the free navigation of the Danube. It refers to the general principle of the free navigation of rivers laid down by the Treaty of Vienna, and to those particularly applicable to the Danube in the Treaty of Paris, in conformity with which no obstruction of any nature was admissible to the navigation of that river.

After stating the exceptional case of the existing war between Russia and Turkey and the obligations imposed by the position of neutrality they have assumed, the Austrian Government consider it their duty to reserve in the most formal manner towards the belligerent Powers the principle of the liberty of the navigation of the Danube, and, while consenting to the inconveniences inseparable from a state of war on the line of the Danube, to record that this exceptional state shall in no way be cited as a precedent to the prejudice of the free navigation of that river; and that, as soon as the course of military operations shall permit, the belligerent Powers shall come to an understanding with the Austro-Hungarian Government for the restoration of the freedom of the navigation on the Lower Danube.

The Ambassador is instructed to request from the Imperial Government a declaration in conformity with the indications given.

On receiving communication of this despatch, I addressed a note to Prince Gortchakow (in obedience to your Lordship's instructions) of which I have the honour to annex a copy, of a similar nature to the instructions sent by Count Andrassy to Baron Langenau.

I have been since informed by Baron Langenau that on communicating the despatch to Prince Gortchakow, his Highness verbally expressed his entire acquiescence in the views and proposal of Count Andrassy, adding that a declaration in the sense requested would be willingly given by the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 685.

Count Andrassy to Baron Langenau.

Vienne, le 6 *Mai*, 1877.

M. le Baron,

EN présence de la guerre qui vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie, nous avons du nous préoccuper de la situation faite à notre commerce et à notre navigation par les opérations militaires qui sont à la veille de se dérouler sur les bords du Bas Danube.

L'Article 109 de l'Acte Final du Congrès de Vienne de 1815 a décidé, en thèse générale, que la navigation des rivières séparant ou traversant plusieurs Etats sera entièrement libre et ne pourra, sous le rapport du commerce et sauf les règlements de police, être interdite à personne. Cette disposition a été confirmée, en ce qui concerne le Danube, par l'Article XV du Traité de Paris de 1856. Aux termes de ces stipulations il ne peut être apporté aucun obstacle, quel qu'il soit, à la libre navigation du Danube.

Les transactions internationales que je viens de rappeler n'impliquent point, il est vrai, la neutralité absolue de la voie fluviale. En dehors des ouvrages et établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube, ainsi que du personnel de cette Commission, déclarés neutres par l'Article 21 de l'Acte Public de 1865, la liberté de navigation garantie sur le Danube, nous sommes obligés d'en convenir, ne saurait empêcher que le cours inférieur du fleuve, de même que ses deux rives ne puissent être enveloppés dans la lutte qui vient de s'ouvrir.

Les devoirs qui découlent de l'attitude de neutralité que nous avons jugé à propos d'adopter en face du conflit actuel nous interdisent de faire prévaloir le droit de libre

navigation sur les mesures qui pourraient être prises par les belligérants dans l'intérêt de leurs opérations militaires.

Mais tout en admettant que les incidents de la guerre puissent amener des entraves passagères pour la navigation Danubienne, nous nous reconnaissons le devoir de réserver dès à présent de la manière la plus formelle, auprès des Puissances belligérantes, le principe de la liberté de cette navigation du Danube que l'Autriche-Hongrie est intéressée en première ligne à voir maintenu.

Votre Excellence est donc chargée de porter officiellement à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial les observations qui précèdent. Vous voudrez bien ajouter que, si nous consentons à nous résigner aux inconvénients inséparables de l'état de guerre sur la ligne du Danube, il est bien entendu que cette situation exceptionnelle ne pourra en aucune façon être invoquée comme un précédent au préjudice de la liberté de navigation; que les mesures restrictives de cette liberté qui seraient rendues indispensables par les exigences de la guerre se règleront sur les principes internationaux; que ces restrictions ne dépasseront pas les limites tracées par la nécessité la plus impérieuse et qu'aussitôt que le cours des opérations de la guerre le permettra, les Puissances belligérantes s'entendront avec nous pour rétablir la liberté de la navigation sur le Bas Danube.

Vous voudrez bien en outre, M. le Baron, prier le Gouvernement Impérial de nous faire parvenir le plus tôt possible une déclaration conforme à ces indications.

Recevez, &c.

(Signé) ANDRASSY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 685.

Lord A. Loftus to Prince Gortchakow.

Mon Prince, *St. Petersburgh, May* $\frac{13}{25}$, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the question of the navigation of the Danube, as affected by the circumstances of the state of war now existing between Russia and Turkey.

The freedom of navigation of rivers traversing different States was fixed in principle by Article CIX of the Treaty of Vienna, and was confirmed in particular as regards the Danube, by Article XV of the Treaty of Paris. By these stipulations no hindrance of any nature could be offered to the free navigation of the Danube.

The above-mentioned acts do not actually neutralize the river. Indeed, with the exception of the works, buildings, and Members of the European Danubian Commission —declared neutral by Article XXI of the Convention of 1865—it cannot be contended that the freedom of navigation of the Danube precludes the lower course of the river as well as its banks from being made the scene of military operations in the present war; such a claim would be at variance with the attitude of neutrality assumed by Her Majesty's Government.

Whilst admitting, however, that incidents of the war may affect momentarily the free navigation of the river, I am instructed by the Earl of Derby to state that Her Majesty's Government feel it their duty to reserve, in the most formal manner as regards the belligerent Powers, the principle of the liberty of the navigation of the Danube; and that they claim that the present exceptional state of things shall not in any manner be cited as a precedent to the prejudice of the freedom of its navigation; that the restrictions on that freedom which may be rendered necessary by the exigencies of war shall be regulated by the principles of international right; that those restrictions shall not exceed the limits of absolute necessity, and that so soon as the circumstances of the war permit, the belligerent Powers shall come to an understanding with the European Powers to restore the freedom of the navigation of the Danube.

In fulfilment of the instructions of the Earl of Derby, I have to request that your Highness will be good enough to respond to this communication as soon as may be convenient.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 686.

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, May 30.)

(Confidential.) *Vienna, May 21, 1877.*

YOUR Excellency has been enabled to gather our views on the future position of Roumania from my telegram No. 61. The present despatch, entering as it does more fully into the details of the matter, is intended to make you acquainted with the reasons justifying, from the Austro-Hungarian stand-point, such views. You will at the same time find therein arguments which we hope will convince the British Government that the special interests of Austria-Hungary are in this instance in complete conformity with the general interests of Europe.

Your Excellency was quite right in styling in your despatch of the 11th of May the actual position of Roumania as "une suzeraineté bâtarde." I also am unable to see in that position anything worth preserving. The Treaty of Paris has, as long as it was respected, only served as an inducement to Roumania to shape its language and its action, not according to the real power of the country, but according to the support which it expected either from the Guaranteeing Powers as a whole, or from the dissensions between those Powers.

The independence of Roumania could only effect a change for the better in this respect. Having to rely exclusively on their own resources, the Roumanians would soon be obliged—instead of continuing to indulge as heretofore in a policy of adventure, to the detriment of themselves as well as of their neighbours—to pursue one more steady, more modest, and therefore more in accordance with the material resources as well as the real interests of the country. Such an independent position would, on the other hand, in no wise tend to increase the Russian influence in the Principalities. As soon as ever Roumania were to become her own mistress, and to be responsible to herself only for her own future, she cannot but realise her complete isolation in the midst of the surrounding Slavs. She must then instinctively shrink from Slavonic Russia, as after having gained her independence through Russian agency she could have nothing more to hope for from that quarter, but would have the justifiable fear that Russia, even if such were not her present intention, would in time have to treat the Latin race as one subject to the Slav. As an independent small State, Roumania would be obliged to seek the support of States other than Russia, who, like England or Austria-Hungary, have no interest to sacrifice to Panslavism, the Roumanian nationality dividing, as it does, the Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula from those of Russia. In this respect the maintenance of an independent Roumania is of the highest importance, not only for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but also for Europe; because a permanent dominion of Russia over the Balkan is impossible as long as the Slav countries there are geographically separated from Russia by an intervening State.

According to your Excellency's above-quoted despatch, Lord Derby seems to incline to the belief that an enlarged Roumania would be likely to play the above part more efficiently. I cannot agree with this view. The guarantees which the Secretary of State seeks are provided for by the independence of Roumania, which will compel the country to adapt its policy to its real interests. An aggrandizement of Roumania through tracts inhabited by Roumanians would only be possible at the expense of the Bucovina or Transylvania, which, of course, is out of the question. To add non-Roumanian elements—for instance, Bulgarian or other Slav territory—would have an effect opposite to the one intended. Such an addition would only tend to counteract on the part of Roumania a strictly national policy, and give her a strong inducement to seek the aid of that State which would help her to keep what she has acquired.

All these considerations, which plead for the independence of Roumania, tell as strongly against her neutralization.

Neutralization can in general be effectively applied only to educated countries that have attained a high development of industry and commerce. It is only such that find in their own interests a sufficient safeguard against embarking in an adventurous foreign policy. For Roumania, whose silly ambition it is to connect her history with that of the old Romans, a guarantee of neutrality would only act as an inducement to pursue in comparative safety an expansive foreign policy, with the ultimate aim of realising the dream of a Daco-Roumanian Empire.

Will your Excellency be pleased to communicate the above in English translation to Lord Derby, but under the express understanding that such communication shall

be regarded as one conveying personal information to his Excellency respecting our views, and shall not be made the occasion for a publication in the Blue Book in any form whatever.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ANDRASSY.

No. 687.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, May 29, 1877, 5·20 P.M.*

VICEROY telegraphed to me on the 25th respecting Seistan, and menace of Herat by Persia: following is substance of my reply sent next day.

Similar reports were current here some weeks ago. They originated in a rumour that the Affghans had invaded Seistan, which proved to be only a bazaar report. The Persian Government totally disbelieved the rumour, and I ascertained from them at the time that they had no intention of dispatching troops to Seistan.

There has been no indication here of there being any desire on the part of Persia to menace Herat. On the contrary, the Persians were for some time under considerable apprehension in consequence of military preparations being made in Affghanistan.

No. 688.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May 30, 1877, 12·20 P.M.*

ON the 26th instant the Russian military authorities sunk two lighters flying the British ensign, laden with corn at Combia.

I have asked for information and explanation from the Roumanian Government.

No. 689.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 30, 1877, 2·40 P.M.*

YOUR telegram not clear. Is Prince going to Constantinople or not?

No. 690.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, May 30, 1877, 4·45 P.M.*

COUNT ADLERBERG invited Captain Wellesley to-day, by order of the Emperor, to accompany Russian army. Count Adlerberg mentioned Count Schouvaloff as having represented displeasure in England at his not having been invited before.

Answer requested immediately, as Count Adlerberg leaves with the Emperor on Saturday next.

No. 691.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 21. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, May 18, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatches No. 4, Political, of the 20th March last, and No. 8, Political, of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that

the Alaï Bey (Colonel of Police) sent to make an inquiry into the alleged outrages at Kelkit Shiran, &c., has returned some time since, and that the result of the investigation as related to me by the Governor-General is—

1. That three Turks accused of having ravished the wife of Dimos, of the village of Termouni, had been put into prison, but their culpability having not been proved according to the law (that is very likely by witnesses), they were set a liberty on their giving bail to present themselves to the Court of Justice whenever evidence could be procured.

2. That a number of Redifs having asked for money from the Greek priest of Ghelm Pertek, which he refused to give saying he had none, they wanted to pass round his neck the entrails of a sheep, and parade him in this condition in the streets of the village seated on a donkey, but eight or ten soldiers, who were quartered in the priest's house, prevented their companions from so doing.

3. That the defiling of the church of Kelahboor, and the taking down of the bill, are pure inventions.

4. That the Redifs have forcibly taken provisions, clothing, and money, ill-using, in several cases, the inhabitants whether Mussulmans or Christians.

5. That no Christian or Mussulman women have been ravished by the Redifs.

6. That two Mussulmans of Shiran, named Mollah Ahmed and Himhim Mehmed, being accused of having incited the Redifs against the Christians, they have been arrested and sent to Gumushané for trial.

7. That it having been proved that Kaimakams of Kelfit and Trool had not acted as they ought to have done under the circumstances, they were dismissed.

8. That the public safety in those remote districts not being such as it could be desired, some measures had been adopted by the Alaï Bey in order to secure it as much as possible.

As the Christian Commissioner of Gumushané, who took part in the investigation, and to whom I have repeatedly applied for information through his friend here, has given no answer of any kind, it may be inferred that he has no observation to make. At all events it is impossible for me to say, in consequence of his silence, whether the Turkish authorities are concealing or extenuating outrages perpetrated against Christians in the districts in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 692.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 45. Political.)
My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, May 15, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch to Her Majesty's Embassy, inclosed in mine to the Foreign Office, marked No. 23, Political, of 13th April, and No. 37, sent in duplicate to your Lordship, marked No. 34, Political, of 27th April, I have now the honour to inclose copy of a further despatch communicating information received from the Governor-General regarding the outrages then reported.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure in No. 692.

Consul Holmes to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Bosna-Serai, May 15, 1877.*

WITH reference to my previous despatches, I have now to state that the Governor-General has informed me that, with regard to case No. 1, Memish Beyovich had been imprisoned, and the fact having been proved before the local Medjliss that he had beaten a Christian on the 6th February, he was sentenced to pay to the plaintiff one Turkish lira, which was accepted as satisfaction.

As to case No. 2, Hadgi Hassan Aluy is reported to be a man of good character, and as yet no evidence has been produced to show that he had cruelly beaten Ivan Antich, but the inquiry is still going on.

With regard to case No. 3, the Governor-General showed me the documents sent to him, which, signed by Christians and Mussulmans, set forth that the house inhabited by Petranovich belonged to the community and was used as a school, that Petranovich having gone to Serajevo with the keys of the house, which was wanted, the heads of the community, accompanied by the proper authorities, broke open the doors and took possession of it. The papers are accompanied with an inventory of all that was found there, consisting of empty bottles and barrels, and a few other articles, said to be of the value of about 160 piastres. All this may or may not be true, but as all the papers are in order, signed by the Christian inhabitants themselves, their evidence would seem to be conclusive. There has been, however, a quarrel between the Catholic community and Petranovich, who was their schoolmaster, and, as I know they have done him great injustice, I shall bring the matter to the notice of Mahzar Pasha when he arrives, and ask for a fresh inquiry.

Cases Nos. 4 and 5 are out of the jurisdiction of Bosnia.

Case No. 6. The Pasha informs me that his further inquiries into this matter prove that the person accused has been wrongly named, as he is called Hair Agha. This individual, in the pursuit of insurgents, arrived at the house of Gavro Jerenich, and found it to be full of them. A demand was made that they should come forth. This was refused. Gavro Jerenich and his wife were then summoned to leave them. This, probably, they could not do, at all events they did not. An attack on the house was then made, which ended in the flight of all its inmates. Gavro Jerenich was wounded in the leg, and his wife killed accidentally by a ball in the head. Gavro, with his six children, is reported to be alive and cured of his wound.

Concerning case No. 7, no further information has been received beyond that given in my despatch of the 27th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 693.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 46. Political.)
My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, May 16, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 44, Political, the Governor-General now informs me that, as Ismet Pasha had met with no insurgents, it was supposed they had fled across the frontier. The fact is, however, that the latter have no object in encountering the Turkish troops, and naturally avoid them, which it is most easy to do, on account of the wooded and mountainous nature of the country.

It appears at present that the troops under Ismet Pasha, from Livno, and Suleiman Bey, from Banialuka, amounting together to about five battalions, have united at Unnatz, or Dervar, in the maps, and have marched to Tishkovatz, where they are about to attack Cerni Potok, or, as the Turks call it, Kara Potok, the stronghold of the insurgents under Despotovich. The latter, according to Mr. Freeman, imagine their position impregnable, and desire nothing more than to give the Turks a warm reception there. If, however, they are hard pressed, they can easily disperse, and find safety among the forests in the neighbourhood.

Whatever may be the result of this expedition, it seems that though it is almost impossible, without many more troops than are now in Bihack and Banialuka, to clear the country of insurgents, the latter can do little more than maintain a guerilla warfare, or state of brigandage, which is not likely to be put down until there is peace between Russia and the Porte, when this state of affairs will naturally die out of itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 694.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 47. Political.)
My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, May 17, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt (to-day) of your Lordship's despatch No. 8 of the 30th April, regarding the alleged case of impalement of Rado Buyich, and, in accordance with your Lordship's suggestion, I have directed Mr. Freeman to proceed to Novi and inquire into this case.

I have also instructed him to make every possible inquiry regarding the impalement which Mr. MacColl believes to have seen on the banks of the Save. This is, however, rendered very difficult, from the fact that that gentleman has never mentioned the spot at which it occurred.

Mr. Freeman's presence at Mostar is not of particular necessity at present, as there seems to be little intention on the part of either the Turks or Montenegrins to attack each other, and otherwise the Herzegovina is quiet.

Mr. Freeman will leave this on the 19th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 695.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 49. Political.)
My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, May 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of Mr. Freeman's Report to me on the outrages and massacres said to have occurred at Glamotch and Otchievo. It seems to me as complete as possible, and to require no comment or explanation on my part.

I have much pleasure, however, in calling your Lordship's notice to the extreme courtesy and attention with which Mr. Freeman was everywhere received by the civil and military authorities, who showed the greatest care in providing for his safety, and afforded him every possible facility in carrying out his investigations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure in No. 695.

Report by Vice-Consul Freeman of Inquiry into certain Massacres and Outrages said to have occurred at Glamotch and Otchievo.

I LEFT Mostar on the 24th of April and arrived at Livno on the 26th. I made most careful inquiry there, and found that no massacre of any bridal procession, or any similar outrage, had occurred at Glamotch. I considered it, therefore, quite unnecessary to proceed to the very town of Glamotch, which is only about 18 miles distant from Livno, as I had opportunities at the latter place of conversing with many of the Christian inhabitants of Glamotch who fled from their homes last year when the town was threatened by the insurgents, and have since resided at Livno, but are in daily communication with their friends at Glamotch. Had any such outrage as that reported in the "Manchester Guardian" really taken place they would certainly have been aware of it. I also saw the Kaimakam of Glamotch, who by chance was at Livno at the same time as myself. I further put myself in communication with the Austrian Vice-Consul, M. Dragomanovich, who gave me every assistance in his power, and confirmed what had been told me by others—that no attack had been made on any bridal procession either in the town or district of Glamotch.

I learn, however, that about three months ago four Christians, said to be on their way to a wedding, had been killed somewhere in the district of Yaitza, which adjoins

that of Glamotch, but could obtain no precise information on the subject. I was convinced, however, that this was the affair in question, so after investigating the Otchievo outrages, of which I will speak further on, I passed through the district of Yaïtza, making careful inquiries as I went, until I was enabled to bring the matter to light and establish the following facts: Four Christians, all armed, named Simo Bilich, Niko Gruzdenach, Pero Gozdach, and Pero Simichich, were proceeding from the village of Tirnova to another neighbouring village, to fetch a bride it is asserted, and were killed on the way. Neither the bride, nor any other female, however, was present, therefore the addition of the outraged woman is entirely false. The relations of the murdered men brought the matter before the authorities and accused a Turkish patrol, under the command of a certain Henitza Mustafa Chaoush, of being the murderers. The authorities of Travnik, the residence of the Mutessarif of the Sandjak of which Yaïtza is a district, are at present investigating the matter. Mustafa Chaoush and eight of his men are in prison there, but they deny all knowledge of the affair. The relations of the murdered men have been told to bring their witnesses, and it is hoped that in a few days the trial of the accused will be commenced. I may mention that several of the inhabitants of Tirnova are said to be with the insurgents, and it is hinted that the victims of this murder were not harmless peasants on their way to fetch a bride, but men about to join the insurgents. Perhaps this and other particulars will be cleared up in the course of the trial. I fear, however, that whatever the rights of the case, complete justice can hardly be looked for. The present Cadi of Travnik resolutely refuses to admit all Christian evidence before the Tribunals, and though Mussulman witnesses are always, it is true, to be found for money, nothing but a miscarriage of justice can be expected where such practices prevail.

On the 28th of April I quitted Livno for Otchievo to investigate the outrage on the inhabitants of that village reported by Mr. Evans. As I should have experienced considerable difficulty and delay in passing through the insurgent district of Grahovo, if arriving from the Turkish side, I crossed over the frontier into Dalmatia at Arzhano, the ordinary road by the Prolog mountain being intercepted, and proceeded to Knin, where I met and examined some of the Otchievo fugitives. From thence I passed through the insurgent district of Tishkovatz to Serb, in Austrian Croatia, where I had arranged that a more considerable number of these fugitives should meet me. I will first give their version of the story, and then the Turkish version, which I obtained at Kulen Vakuf and Petrovatz, from those who actually took part in the expedition against Otchievo. I would, however, previously remark how extremely difficult it is to obtain from these ignorant peasants a succinct and consecutive account of what took place. Their statements were exceedingly contradictory, and it was only after a lengthened interrogatory and careful cross-examination that I could at all make their several stories coincide. There is no doubt that they had a strong inclination, hardly, perhaps, an unnatural one, to make out a bad case against the Turks, and probably they are to a great extent put up to this by their Slave friends and sympathizers in Austrian Croatia and Dalmatia.

I questioned altogether about fifteen men and twenty women and girls, but more closely examined a few of the most intelligent.

The men Stavo Karanovich, Damian Karanovich, and Blazo Karanovich made the following deposition:—About Easter time last year Tahir Bey Kulenovich with 500 Bashi-Bazouks made a descent on the villages of Great and Little Otchievo. Some few of the villagers had arms, but offered no resistance. On this occasion Danilo Karanovich, Zeccan Karanovich, Peter Karanovich, Jovo Shipka, and Trivko Sharatz were killed. All the other men, women, and children, with what cattle, goods, and chattels they could take, forsook their houses and passed over into Austria. In the beginning of winter their Beys and Agas, the owners of the soil, Nedjib Bey Kulenovich, Ibrahim Bey Kulenovich, Osman Aga Angich, Uso Aga Kurtavich, and Ahmet Aga Janbegovich, communicated with them with a view to induce them to return to their homes, and promised that they should not be molested. In consequence of this, between five and six months ago, they returned to their villages, which had not been burnt, and for some months no Turks came near them. One morning, a little before last Easter, the ground being then covered with snow, a large body of Turks, which they estimated at 500 or 600, Redif and irregulars, were discerned advancing on the village. The men all fled to the hills and during their flight were fired on by the troops and one man, Jefto Karanovich, wounded. The Knez (village elder), Vaso Karanovich, was met by the Turks before arriving at the village and killed and beheaded. The village was then fired and about 700 head of small cattle and 130 horned cattle and horses driven off. They said the leaders of the expedition were the

Kaïmakam of Petrovatz, Ali Bey, and Mohamed Boy Kulenovich, and Ali Bey Chooka. I inquired how they identified them, since they all fled on the first approach of the Turks, but they replied that the women had told them. They could not positively assert that the women had been outraged, but they supposed so. After three days, as the Turks did not again appear, the men returned to fetch their women and children. If the village was entirely burnt as they represent, it seems extraordinary that they should have left their women and children exposed during three days and nights to the inclemency of the weather without making an effort to save them.

I next examined the women Simeona Shipka, Stana Karanovich, Dosta Karanovich, and Stana Yankosich. They gave a somewhat similar account of the affair—stated that they had been outraged by the Turks, but could not say whether by the regulars or the Bashi-Bazouks, but that the girls had not been touched, as they fled to the hills with the men. They themselves remained, as they could not forsake their children. No women or children had been either killed or wounded. Simeona Shipka's child had been thrown into the river; they could not say by whom, but had been easily rescued. No children had died from exposure in the snow. When I inquired if the whole village was then burnt, Dosta Karanovich admitted that the Kaïmakam of Petrovatz had prevented her house from being burnt because she had some sick children lying there, and a certain Mino Aga Duratcha protected the house of Mara Shipka. None of them could positively certify who were the leaders of the expedition, as the women did not know them personally, and the invariable answer to my inquiries was, "I was told so."

I then questioned the girls Deva, daughter of the Knez Vaso, who was killed, and Angelia, daughter of Danilo Karanovich, as to whether they had been violated. They at first denied it, but at last said that they and three other girls had been thus outraged. Altogether the evidence was of a very vague and unsatisfactory character, and did not, I must confess, bear the stamp of undeniable truth. The peasants denied that they had any intercourse with the insurgents, or that their village was ever frequented by them, and yet in the insurgent camp at Tishkovatz I was told that a band who have their headquarters at the burnt monastery of Armain, on the Unnatz, fired across the river at the Turks to protect the retreating villagers.

I next proceeded to Kulen Vakuf and Petrovatz, and heard from the various Beys, and from the Kaïmakam of the latter place, all particulars of the attack on Otchievo. I would first remark that I have been acquainted with the Kaïmakam of Petrovatz, Césaï Boy, for many years, and from my knowledge of him I believe him perfectly incapable of perpetrating or encouraging any wanton cruelty or outrage. He is not at all reticent with me, and I know him to be perfectly devoid of anything like fanaticism or hatred for the Christians.

Last year the insurgents made a desultory attack on the town of Kulen Vakuf during three consecutive days, but they were finally repulsed by the troops under Colonel Vesel Bey, and followed up as far as Otchievo. They were driven out of Little Otchievo and the village was fired, but Vesel Bey was received so warmly at Great Otchievo that he was forced to retire to Vakuf, and from that time up to the late expedition no Turks, either troops or others, have ventured near these villages. When the armistice was concluded last November with Servia and Montenegro Colonel Despotovich, the commander of the insurgents in Bosnia, communicated to Césaï Bey the positions then occupied by his men in the direction of Petrovatz, requesting that they should be respected by the Turks. This communication was forwarded to the Governor-General, Nasif Pasha, who replied that there was no armistice with the insurgents, and instructed Césaï Bey to attack them whenever and wherever he should find them.

In the beginning of March the authorities of Kulen Vakuf sent word to the Kaïmakam of Petrovatz that they had received notice from a certain Gregor, an Austrian subject, that the insurgents were preparing to attack the Mussulman villages of Orashitza and Tchukova, and asked what steps they should take for their protection. The Kaïmakam instantly repaired to Vakuf in person, and assured himself, by careful inquiry, that the insurgents were, in fact, assembling at Otchievo with a view to attack the above-mentioned villages, and were only detained by the bad state of the weather. He therefore started the next day with about 130 Bashi-Bazouks for Otchievo, but was attacked so vigorously when nearing the village, that he was forced to beat a hasty retreat. The following day (Sunday), taking with him a larger force, consisting of about 250 Bashi-Bazouks and fifty men of the frontier regiment, of which two companies were stationed at Vakuf, he advanced again on Otchievo. When he

arrived at the site of Little Otchievo, burnt last year, as stated above, by Vesel Bey, he found the insurgents in ambush awaiting the arrival of the Turks. The latter instantly opened fire, and an incessant skirmishing was then kept up for upwards of four hours, the insurgents being gradually driven back step by step, and forced to abandon their village, their final retreat, according also to Turkish testimony, being covered by insurgents from Armain firing across the River Unnatz. There were no casualties on the Turkish side, and the only one killed of the villagers or insurgents was Vaso Karanovich, who, having been wounded, was then beheaded. The Kaïmakam ordered to be burnt four houses, which were not peasants' huts, but sort of guard-houses, used by the insurgents, but denies that he burnt the whole village, and states that it must have been done by the insurgents and villagers themselves when they finally evacuated the place. He also emphatically denies that any outrages on the women or other excesses were committed to his knowledge, and it was already so late in the day when the fighting ceased, that the Turks had barely time to reach Vakuf before dark. Césaï Bey, who, though an Osmanli, has been since his youth in this country, and knows Slave perfectly, then spoke encouragingly to the women, and told them if they liked to come to Vakuf they would be housed and protected by the authorities, and receive rations from the Government. They would, however, give no decided answer; stated that they were, on the one hand, afraid of the insurgents, and, on the other, of the Turks, and made other meagre excuses, so Césaï Bey said he would await at Vakuf three days for their decision. That period having expired without receiving any communication from them, he returned to Petrovatz, and thus ended the affair of Otchievo.

This version of the Kaïmakam of Petrovatz was borne out by inquiries made from other parties. The few Christian families remaining in Vakuf and Petrovatz seemed to know little of the matter, but what information they could give rather tended to corroborate the statement of the Turks; and a certain Pero, the most intelligent and respectable Christian I met at Petrovatz, where he is member of the Medjliss, and many of whose relations have joined the insurgents, stated that, as far as he was aware, the Kaïmakam had truthfully recounted the matter.

I think it not impossible that some outrages may have been perpetrated at Otchievo, although certainly not to the extent alleged. Even the testimony of the villagers themselves proved this; and the statement of Dosta Karanovich that the Kaïmakam of Petrovatz prevented her house being fired because she had sick children there, clearly demonstrates that he was not devoid of all feelings of humanity, as it was attempted to show. He admitted that the head of Vaso Karanovich had been brought to Vakuf. He made a present of Vaso's gun to the man who had killed him, and this latter, with uncivilized and barbarian notions of gratitude, instantly drew forth from his wallet the head, and presented it to the Kaïmakam, who gave it to a Christian of the name of Lazar for interment.

In such cases it is almost impossible to arrive at the truth. Both parties naturally hide their own delinquencies and exaggerate those of their adversaries, and there are literally no impartial persons on whose word full reliance can be placed. The one fact, however, which completely changes the whole phase of this Otchievo affair is that the village was undoubtedly a resort of insurgents, and resistance was offered to the constituted authority of the country. I am far from wishing to palliate any excesses that may have been committed; but I desire to make it clear, as it is to my own mind, that this was not a mere wanton attack on inoffensive and unarmed peasants.

I am ready, however, to make every allowance for newspaper correspondents and others who only hear one side of the question. By daily contact with the insurgents, and with the misery of the poor fugitives constantly before their eyes, it is natural that their liveliest sympathies should be aroused in their behalf, and I acknowledge that I myself was profoundly and painfully moved at the sight of so much suffering. It must also be remembered that these poor people are inclined to make the most of their misfortunes, with a view to excite compassion and obtain assistance.

From Knin I made an excursion along the neighbouring frontier expressly to verify the state of the Bosnian refugees. They, almost without exception, lack the first necessaries of life—shelter, food, and clothing. They either live in huts through which every blast of wind blows and into which the rain penetrates in torrents, or else in holes and caves in the hill sides, crowded together like animals, and breathing the most pestilential air. Their clothing barely covers their attenuated limbs, and it was a piteous sight to behold the young children, wan and haggard, shivering in the cold north wind which was blowing the day I was there. Of food they have barely

sufficient to sustain life, and have no longer the physical strength to resist the most trifling maladies. The Austrian Government has now reduced its subvention to these fugitives to 5 kreuzers a-head per diem. The strong men capable of working receive nothing, but in a poor country like Dalmatia they can find no employment. It is calculated that one-fourth of the fugitives have already succumbered to disease and privation, and were it not for the generous aid afforded by the "Bosnian Relief Fund" the mortality must have been immeasurably greater.

I conversed with many of the refugees, and as I passed through the district of Tishkovatz I had an interview with Despotovich and other insurgent leaders, and also found occasion to talk with several of the men. The leaders, of course, entertain certain political notions—talk of Slav nationality and of rescuing Bosnia from the hand of the Turk—but the generality of the insurgents and fugitives, between whom it is difficult to make a distinction, as any able-bodied fugitive would join the insurgents if provided with arms and promised food, have no political ideas whatever. They profess themselves faithful subjects of the Sultan, and regret what has taken place, but say they have suffered too much at the hands of their Beys and the zaptiehs for them to think of returning to their homes, to be on the same footing as formerly; and an old man, said to have been one of the wealthiest villagers in the neighbourhood of Petrovatz, emphatically exclaimed, "Ah, Sir, you little know what we have had to put up with, and if our position is not to be bettered I will never return myself, and would sooner kill my children with my own hand than permit them to return." It is, however, probable that a feeling of having been the instruments of the entire ruin of their Beys makes them also fear their vengeance, and I would, moreover, remark that it being a custom of the landowners to advance money to their peasants, to be repaid after harvest time, many of the latter are in debt to the Turkish landlords. When I questioned others among the insurgents, who had formerly been well-to-do townspeople and merchants at Bihach, Petrovatz, and elsewhere, they seemed to have no valid reason for having joined the insurrection. The general answer was, "others fled, therefore I did also." There was apparently a kind of panic last year among the Christian townspeople in the north-west of Bosnia, which led many quiet respectable men to forsake everything and fly. They regret having done so now, but they are ruined men, and have very little, if any, inducement to return.

I am happy, however, to be able to report that, wherever I passed, the Christians still remaining in Bosnia seemed tolerably reassured. They say the excesses and outrages committed by the Bashi-Bazouks last year all over the country were beyond description, and even respectable Turks have admitted to me that every possible horror had been perpetrated during the past two years, but all alike bear witness to the orderly conduct of the troops at the present moment. There are, of course, isolated cases of misconduct, but their presence generally seems to afford a sense of security to all classes. They are, it is true, composed of the same men who served as Bashi-Bazouks, but the latter were an irregular horde, answerable to none for their actions, whereas the military officers know that they will be held more or less responsible for the conduct of their men, and are forced to maintain a certain discipline.

At Kulen Vakuf, Petrovatz, and Kljuch I conversed with many of the native Beys and Agas. These landowners in the Kraïna have the reputation of being more oppressive towards their rayahs than in any other part of Bosnia, and I regret to say that, according to common report, they had but little respect for the wives and daughters of their dependents. In a country, however, like Bosnia, where morality is at such a very low point, this last grievance is not, I should say, their greatest.

This insurrection has been a bitter lesson to the Mussulman landowners. I visited many who, two years ago, were wealthy men, and are now reduced almost to the verge of poverty. They expressed themselves most anxious for the return of the fugitives, and said that, as far as their means went, they would do all they could to re-establish them on their lands, but trusted that the Government would come to their assistance. They said they could never regain their lost wealth or hope to rebuild their own houses which had been burnt, and, on whichever side the fault, they seemed to think that they had been the greatest sufferers, as they maintain that a very few years will suffice to restore the peasants to their former state of ease, while they themselves can never regain their old position.

The country through which I passed from the Austrian frontier beyond Kulen Vakuf to Kljuch is one extensive waste, and I am told that the greater part of the Sandjak of Bihach is in a similar state. With the exception of the towns, not a house remains standing, some having been burnt by the insurgents, others by the Turks in warfare; the arable land is uncultivated, and crops of last year still lie

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rotting on the ground: and I traversed mile after mile of the most magnificent pasturages without seeing a single head of cattle. The townspeople dare not venture many hundred yards beyond the towns to plough the soil or mow the grass, as marauding bands of insurgents are continually roaming over the country to carry off cattle or anything they can lay their hands on; and only a week before I arrived at Vakuf, a certain Osman and his wife of the village of Klisa had gone further than usual to cultivate a field, when a band of brigands swooped down, killing them both and carrying off their cattle. The man did not die immediately, and he declared that he recognized the murderers as Austrian subjects from over the frontier. In fact, the general complaint at Vakuf seemed to be that they suffered more from these marauding bands of Austrian Croatians than from their own insurgent rayahs.

In the districts of Grahovo and Tishkovatz, Colonel Despotovich maintains the strictest discipline among his men, and no one dares disobey his orders. Although he will not disdain to carry off a Turkish convoy of provisions or a caravan of merchants goods, he prohibits all petty brigandage, and punishes severely, on occasion even by death, it is said, any wanton murders. When, however, I requested him to give orders that I should not be molested on my journey to Vakuf, Petrovatz, Kljuch, &c., he declined to hold himself responsible for my safety beyond the Unnatz, and recommended me not to travel in that direction without an escort of Turkish troops. The number of insurgents under his command may be estimated at about 5,000, almost without exception natives of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, who are scattered over the country in bands of from 200 to 1,000 men each, but who can all be assembled at one spot in case of need. They are tolerably well armed, most of them having Snider rifles taken from the Turkish troops on several occasions last year. Men are not wanting, for, as I said before, every fugitive would be ready to carry arms if it would insure him food; but the insurgents have no means of procuring arms, and would also find it impossible to provision a large force. The head-quarters of Despotovich are at Tzerni Potok in Tishkovatz, at a point known as the Triplex Confinium, *i.e.*, where the confines of Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Croatia meet. It is a most inaccessible position, and the insurgents seem to consider themselves quite secure there.

In conclusion I beg to state that, not having seen Mr. Evans' letter to Captain Burton before my departure on my journey of inquiry, I confined my investigations to the alleged Glamotch and Otchievo outrages, and at the same time endeavoured to obtain information as to the general state of the country. Had I been aware of the reported outrages at Klekovatza and Vaganatz, I should have inquired into them also, but I have little doubt I should have found them to be as exaggerated as those which I investigated.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

Bosna-Seraï, May 15, 1877.

No. 696.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 80.)
(Decypher.)
My Lord, *Tiflis, May* 21, 1877.

I HAVE been informed that the affair of Ardahan was after all but a sham fight, and that the Pasha or Governor surrendered himself and gave up the place to the Russians, he having previously been bribed. How far this is true I cannot say, but an investigation should be at once made by the Porte into the conduct of the officer commanding there and others. One thing I am assured is that 140,000 gold paul imperials were sent from this to Ardahan about ten days ago. I am told that after the surrender of the town the townspeople revolted against the Russians, and 800 of the townspeople were butchered by the Lesghian troops in Russian employment. The Russian official account says "that 800 Turks were found killed in the city—the prisoners relate that the massacred were thrown into the River Kur;" they do not say the Turkish troops, and, therefore, as the Turkish troops were on the heights out of the city I am led to give some credit to the above-mentioned report. I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement, but a serious investigation into all the circumstances relating to the capture and occupation of Ardahan by the Porte seems necessary. There is a rumour of an attempt being made to bribe the Governor of

Kars. Prince Mirsky has gone to Zugdidi, where an attack is expected from the Circassians.

I am told that some twenty wounded go to Kutais from Ozurt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

P.S.—150 men of reserve arrived here to-day.

G. T. R.

No. 697.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, May* 21, 1877.

I HAD to-day the honour to telegraph to your Lordship that M. Cogalniceano, in reply to an interpellation in the Chambers, stated that he considered the independence of Roumania to be accomplished, as the Porte has severed the relations of the two States.

The Minister also averred that he considered Roumania in a state of war with Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 698.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, May* 23, 1877.

I SENT your Lordship this morning a telegram to the effect that the Legislative Assemblies presented addresses yesterday to the Prince on the eleventh anniversary of his accession to the Throne, proclaiming virtually Roumanian independence.

Prince Charles thanked each deputation separately.

In the evening there was a military and civil torchlight procession, which paraded the streets, passing by and cheering at the palace and at the residences of the Ministers, Bratiano and Cogalniceano. Otherwise there was not much enthusiasm.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 699.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 97. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, May* 23, 1877.

YESTERDAY being the eleventh anniversary of the accession of Prince Charles, after the usual religious ceremonies and Te Deum at the Metropolitan Cathedral, His Highness received addresses from the Cabinet, the Metropolitan and the Clergy, and from the legislative bodies, besides various others.

The address delivered by M. Demetre Bratiano, the Vice-President of the Senate, alluded to the circumstances connected with the Prince's arrival in these Principalities, and then proceeded to treat of the actual circumstances of the country, in consequence of the war, and the independence of Roumania as the result of the acts of the Sublime Porte, concluding with the words (in referring to the past, and with aspirations for the future) the Assembly of Representatives of the country, as well as Europe, will be rejoiced to be able to salute, in the person of your Highness, the King of Roumania.

The reply of the Prince, of which I have the honour to forward a translation, is more or less an echo of the addresses of the two Legislative Bodies, and will give your

Lordship an exact idea of the circumstances of the present situation and policy of this country.

In the evening there was a torch-light procession with music and banners, which after saluting the Prince, who appeared on the balcony of the palace, proceeded to make a similar demonstration before the Ministries, in honour of the Minister-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The town was profusely decorated with the national colours, inscribed here and there with the word "Independence," but, on the whole, no great enthusiasm was manifested by the public, whose curiosity was somewhat divided between this national act and the Grand Duke Nicholas, who happened to be passing four-and-twenty hours in Bucharest.

It is extremely improbable that, even at a future epoch, when the independence of this country shall have received recognition, the regal title would be assumed, as the traditions of these Principalities do not lend themselves to the title of King.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 699.

Reply of Prince Charles of Roumania to the Addresses of the Legislative Bodies on the Anniversary of his Accession to the Throne.

(Translation.)

M. le Président!

MM. les Députés!

VOUS me rappelez les paroles que j'ai prononcés, il y a onze ans, alors que pour la première fois j'ai mis le pied dans le palais de la nation. Ces paroles sont chères à mon cœur, elles ont été le guide de mon règne pendant la série d'années que nous avons parcourues ensemble.

Aujourd'hui, comme au 10 Mai, 1866, je ne regrette pas d'avoir quitté ma famille ni de m'être éloigné de mon pays natal. Non, Messieurs, je n'ai pas de regret, car j'ai fait de la Roumanie ma patrie, car j'ai fait de la nation Roumaine ma famille.

Au contraire, aujourd'hui que j'ai appris à connaître les beautés de ce pays et les destinées auxquelles il est en droit d'aspirer, aujourd'hui que j'ai pu apprécier plus exactement les hautes qualités qui distinguent le peuple Roumain, ce m'est une vive joie de me rappeler le jour où j'ai été élu Prince, le jour où je suis arrivé au milieu des Roumains, le jour où vous m'avez confié le trône illustré par tant de grands Princes, glorieux défenseurs de l'indépendance nationale, et de la croix contre le croissant.

Un seul nuage voilait encore les années écoulées, une seule humiliation continuait à exister pour les Roumains et pour leur Prince, je veux dire ces liens mal définis et sans nul fondement, qui s'appelaient à Constantinople suzeraineté, et à Bucarest vassalité.

Ecarter ces liens auxquels répugnent et notre position et nos intérêts, et même nos droits *ab antiquo*, les remplacer par les relations qui au XIX^{e} siècle unissent entre eux les Etats et les peuples libres, tel a été le but constant de deux générations de Roumains, surtout depuis 1857 jusqu'à ce jour. Et je suis en droit d'affirmer que mon élection, mon arrivée sur votre appel des sources du Danube aux bouches de ce grand fleuve, enfin la mission même de mon règne, n'ont eu d'autre signification que d'affranchir la Roumanie de ces liens.

Ces liens la Sublime Porte les a rompus d'elle-même, au cours d'événements que nous n'avons ni désirés, ni provoqués. Nous n'irons pas les rétablir. N'est-ce pas vous, n'est-ce pas la réunion de tous les corps de l'Etat, n'est-ce pas la nation toute entière, qui avez déclaré et proclamé que par la rupture de ces liens, la Roumanie rentre dans son ancienne indépendance comme peuple libre, comme Etat d'une individualité absolue, comme membre utile, pacifique et civilisateur de la grande famille des Etats de l'Europe.

C'est maintenant à l'énergie et au dévouement de tous les fils de ce pays, c'est à la prudence politique des corps de l'Etat, c'est aussi à moi (permittez-moi cette affirmation), c'est à mon zèle, à mon activité, à mon infatigable constance, qu'il appartient de poursuivre et d'atteindre, pour la nouvelle situation politique de la Roumanie, une consécration Européenne.

La bienveillance, la haute sollicitude, avec lesquelles les Grandes Puissances et les augustes Souverains ont accueilli tous nos efforts pour renaître à une vie nationale, nous autorisent à espérer que, dis-je, nous donnent la ferme confiance, que ce puissant

concours ne manquera pas à la Roumanie, dans ces moments suprêmes, alors qu'elle ne réclame que ce qui lui revient à titre de peuple digne d'être libre, de pays qui n'a pas trompé l'attente de l'Europe, d'Etat qui a la force et l'intelligence nécessaires à l'accomplissement de la mission qui lui est assignée par sa position géographique.

Avec cet espoir, avec cette foi, avec cette volonté, l'indépendance de la Roumanie, loin d'être une inquiétude pour la paix de l'Europe, pour la tranquillité des Etats voisins, aura comme effet, j'en ai la ferme conviction, non seulement de donner satisfaction à nos exigences nationales mais de répondre à un haut intérêt Européen.

Je vous remercie encore, MM. les Députés, des paroles que vous m'avez adressées en ce jour mémorable, la Princesse s'associe à ces remerciments et d'une même voix nous souhaitons: vivent les Représentants Roumains, et au-dessus de nous tous, vive la Roumanie!

No. 700.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 31.)

(No. 98. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, May* 24, 1877.

I HAD a very long conversation with M. Cogalniceano yesterday afternoon, and I think it necessary, and indeed the Minister particularly requested me, to repeat the substance to your Lordship.

The Minister began by saying that their Convention with Russia had been the subject of much misrepresentation; that Russian armies being collected on the Pruth, the entrance into this country was imminent; that no permission had been asked of the Roumanian Government; that the Russian forces were about to cross the frontier "in spite of them," and against their wishes; that, under these circumstances, in order to preserve the individuality of the Roumanian executive, the Convention became a necessity; had the arrangement not been made, they risked to see Russian Governors-General installed in Jassy and Bucharest.

That there was not and never had been a semblance of alliance or even co-operation, and for the best of all possible reasons, that Russia would enter into no alliance whatever with this country. That he (the Minister) had always been opposed to any "coquetteries" with Russia; that the latter had nothing to give them, and if she had anything would not give it; that he did not say that if Russia had offered to Roumania independence, neutralization, and territorial aggrandisement, he would not have been heart and soul in the Russian interest, but that history and experience had taught them that Russia, as far as this country is concerned, takes but does not give.

He continued, public opinion, the army, and the country, almost to a man, is opposed to Russian influence and sympathy with Russia, and that now when the armies of the Czar are quartered in the country this feeling is much intensified. That a practical proof of their being no *entente* on the part of the Government of Prince Charles with Russia, is the fact that the Convention is being violated at every moment by the Russian military authorities; that their Commissioners with the different army corps, and at the head-quarters spend their time in formulating remonstrances on this head from every part of the country; and that it was known that the Grand Duke Nicholas had, no later than yesterday, addressed a complaint to St. Petersburgh with respect to the obstructiveness of the Roumanian authorities.

I remarked that I am well aware that the whole country was dead against Russian proclivities, but that it was to be feared that in this respect M. Bratiano's Cabinet represented neither the interests nor the feelings of the country.

M. Cogalniceano replied, in the autumn and winter, and, indeed, up to a recent date, M. Bratiano unquestionably sailed with the Russian current, as he imagined that they had something to gain by pursuing a Russian policy, but that latterly the Minister President had become convinced that he had been in error.

The Minister said that they hoped for the indulgent countenance of the Guaranteeing Powers to support them in maintaining their national existence, of which the complete independence of Roumania was but the natural development.

This country was by the fault of the Porte in a state of warfare with the Ottoman Empire, but that, as far as he could influence the policy of the Government of Prince Charles, he was quite determined not to permit the war to depart from a strictly defensive character; and that, as long as he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Roumanian army should not on any pretext cross the Danube.

M. Cogalniceano also stated that he felt certain that Prince Charles, owing to the want of consideration on the part of the Russian Government, is a good deal cured of his desire to see the Moldo-Wallachian forces brigaded in the Russian armies.

A considerable portion of the above I have already, in various despatches, had the honour to bring to your Lordship's notice; but the whole is interesting when coming from the mouth of M. Cogalniceano.

I should not omit that the Minister lays much stress on the destiny of Roumania as the natural guardian of the mouths of the Danube—a weak Power which would never be obstructive to international interests from a love of adventure or lust of ambition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 701.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 31, 11·45 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, May* 31, 1877, 9·30 A.M.

PRINCE promises to leave in a few days; want of money and a (quantity) of obstacles.

No. 702.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877, 2·15 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 26th, Her Majesty's Government have nothing to add to the instructions respecting the Suez Canal sent to you on the 16th.

No. 703.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 31, 3·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, May* 31, 1877, 1 P.M.

TUG "Annette," belonging to Danube Tug and Lighter Company, after having been struck lately by a Turkish shell, was sunk, by order of the Russians, on the 26th May, at Flaminda.

I have asked for a report on the subject from the Roumanian Government.

No. 704.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877, 4 P.M.

REPORTS of an intended Russian advance on Merve have been received from Viceroy of India. Have you any information on the subject, or can you ascertain from Napier if he knows anything of it? According to our latest information Russians should not be nearer to Merve than Kizil Arvart.

No. 705.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received May* 31.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 31, 1877.

FOLLOWING telegram from Kemball, dated 30th instant:—

"Still no decisive indication of Russian plan of operations, whether to undertake capture of Kars, or mask that place and march on Euphrates. Russians occupied Penneck, but have not advanced on other line to Keuprikeui. Turkish left close

column has retired to Olti, centre and right have column still in the position they held on my visit to front. They have not yet retired to Keuprikeui, as before surmised, but may be expected to retire when enemy shows himself in force. Skirmishes reported from Kars and Khelat of no importance. No (movement) towards Van as yet reported. Turks are working to complete defences on Devetoyoun and on Olti road. Guns come up from Trebizond, but no provisions have been stored in Erzeroum in the event of Russia occupying the Olti road and cutting the supplies with cavalry.

No. 706.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have been informed that, up to the 22nd instant, there was no Turkish naval force stationed off Odessa to maintain the blockade. State this to the Porte, and inquire whether the blockade has been made effective.

No. 707.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 151.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 469 of May 16, giving an interesting account of a conversation which you had with the Sultan on the state of affairs, at a private interview with His Majesty on the 15th instant, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 708.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 152.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I APPROVE of your having applied for a private audience of the Sultan, at which you obtained His Majesty's promise that the amnesty to the Bulgarians should, with certain exceptions, be granted, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 463 of the 15th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 709.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 153.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 464, Confidential, of May 16, giving an account of the arguments which you used in order to overcome the Sultan's reluctance to grant an amnesty to the imprisoned Bulgarians; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings, and sanction your proposed employment of Mr. Blunt, as a confidential agent to come to an understanding with the authorities as to the persons who are to be excepted from it, or who are, on grounds of public safety, to be placed under "surveillance" if released.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 710.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 154.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 442 of the 12th instant, reporting that, owing to the strong representations which you have made to the Porte, the appointment of Shefket Pasha to an important command at Erzeroum has been cancelled, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve your proceedings in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 711.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Blunt.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 11, Political, of May 8, respecting a recent outrage upon a party of Bulgarians, who had gone to the village of Palaskioi to claim some stolen cattle; and I have to state to you that I approve your having brought this case to the notice of the Vali.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 712.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 190.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE learnt with satisfaction, from your despatch No. 471 of the 23rd instant, the nature of the steps taken by Mr. James Long to relieve the persons, irrespective of their nationality, who suffered from the late disturbances in Bulgaria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 713.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 15.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 44, Political, of the 20th instant, on the subject of a recent attack by the Montenegrins on a convoy returning from Nichsich to Spuz, on which occasion the Turks were, it is alleged, robbed of forty-six horses, in spite of the arrangement which had been concluded for the revictualling of that place, and in reply I have to state to you that I approve your proceedings in this matter, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

END